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The American University in Cairo
The School of Humanities and Social Sciences

The Interface of Politeness Strategies and Power Relations in Disagreements among
Egyptian Students

A Thesis Submitted to
The Department of Applied Linguistics
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages Program
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
The degree of Master of Arts

By
Hend Tarek Bakry

Under the supervision of Dr. Marilyn Plumlee
December 2015

To my adored daughter

Khadija

This is for you, Dija.

To my beloved mother

Eng. Shahira El Mahalawy

It would have never been possible without your support, encouragement, and constant love.

And

To my beloved dad

Eng. Tarek Bakry

Thanks for always being there for me.

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Abstract

Disagreement is generally done in opposition to a speaker's claim, in an educational context it can be defined as a student's verbal or non-verbal opposition to classmates' or the teacher's stance that emerge through different instructional and non-instructional situations. The purpose of the study is to qualitatively examine Egyptian undergraduates' disagreements with participants of different power relations in EFL classrooms from a politeness theory perspective.

The study introduces Egyptian EFL classrooms as a new context for studying the interface of power and politeness in disagreements in general and for exploring the impact of other variables such as context, social distance and type of interactional activities on the realization of disagreements.

Data were collected through videotaping two classes of business-English, with a total of 18 hours of observation. In addition, interviews were conducted with a sub-set of the participants to gather in-depth information about the students' pragmatic choices and a questionnaire evaluating social distance between peers was administered to all participants. In the 18 hours of data collected, 34 students expressed 90 turns of disagreement; 35 of these were directed to the teacher, while 55 were to peers.

Spontaneous disagreements were coded and categorized according to the Brown and Levinson (1987) politeness theory using Rees-Miller's (2000) taxonomy, adapted here to include strategies from Muntigl and Turnbull's (1998) taxonomy. Analysis of the data showed that although students employed various positive and negative politeness strategies to soften disagreements when

addressing power superiors, students employed many aggravated disagreements when discussing the teachers' language input. The use of different negative politeness strategies and aggravated disagreements between peers were attributed to social distance and the type of interactional activities. The findings of this study might help provide some insight into the aspects that should be incorporated into the teaching of pragmatics in EFL classrooms.

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List of Abbreviations

D:	social distance
DA:	discourse analysis
DCT:	Discourse Completion Task
ESP:	English for specific purposes
EFL:	English as a foreign language
FTA:	face threatening act
H:	hearer
IRB:	Institutional review board
P:	the relative power between the speaker and the interlocutor.
P+:	power superior
NNS:	nonnative speakers
NS:	native speakers
S:	speaker

Coding Conventions

Positive politeness strategies

Humour:	PPH
Token agreements:	PPA

Negative politeness strategies

Questions:	NPQ
Hedging:	NPH
Counter claims:	NPCC

Softened contradictions

Contradictions mitigated by justifications:	OCON+JUST
---	-----------

Neither softened nor strengthened

Contradiction:	OCON
Verbal shadowing:	OVS

Aggravated disagreements

L1 and L2 discourse markers like "of course":	ADL
Challenging questions:	ADC
Irrelevancy claims:	ADIR
Aggravated verbal shadowing through voice intonation:	AOVS

Nonverbal disagreements

Facial expressions:	NVF
Gestures:	NVG
Laughter:	NVL

Transcription Conventions

((student looks down))	transcriber comment
/? /	inaudible utterance
(...)	medium length pause
(..)	short pause
do:	elongated syllable
do::	extra elongation of syllable
@	laughter
\/	Fall-rise intonation
→	a point of interest, discussed by the analyst
=	the second utterance immediately latched to the first
↑	rising intonation
Underlining (ex: <u>correct</u>)	emphatic stress
[]	English translation in interviews [Definitely not]
Italics:	Arabic texts in interviews (<i>hɔ:θ ʔal ha:gθ fa: ʔna bθzaʕθd ʔlɛθhθ</i>)

< L2 L2>

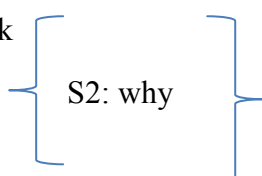


code switching

The point when an ongoing utterance overlaps another

end of overlap

Ex: S1: I don't think



S1: because

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background and rational

The discussion of power is crucial when scrutinizing aspects of interpersonal communication; in fact, there can be no interaction among people without a negotiation of power. Locher (2004) posits that two of the main features of any face-to face interaction are power and politeness. She further explains that power is very common in daily situations, with one either exercising power over his/her addressees or having a kind of power exercised over him/ her. Such a case is manifested in different relationships, such as the relationship between employers and employees, professor and students, as well as interviewers and interviewees, when any of them exercises power over the other or vice versa. In either of these cases, when someone of a higher status exercises power or someone addresses a power superior, it is softened by showing consideration to the addressees, and it is here that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory comes into play. The essence of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is that any speech acts, such as refusals or requests, inherently threaten the addressee's public image, and thus they need to be mitigated through various strategies, which are called politeness strategies. One speech act that manifests the interplay between power and politeness strategies is disagreement, which is characterized by its conflictive nature.

According to Bassiouney (2009) Egyptians are particularly sensitive to power relations, meaning that they pay respect to factors such as age and occupation when addressing others. However, this contradicted the preliminary findings of the pilot study that was conducted in the Fall 2014. The preliminary findings of the pilot study showed that Egyptian undergraduates tended to use direct disagreements while addressing interlocutors of higher power such as a university professor who was the

first figure the students had to express disagreement with on written DCTs. This was contrary to expectations, as Brown and Levinson (1987) made it clear that direct strategies, referred to as bald-on-record strategies, are not expected when power superiors are being addressed. Based on what Bassiouney (2009) mentioned about Egyptians' awareness of power relations and the results of a pilot study, it would be useful to study the interface of power and politeness strategies in disagreement within the context of Egyptian advanced EFL classrooms, which provide a new setting for examining the influence of power differences on the use of politeness strategies when expressing disagreements. Instances of disagreement can arise in advanced level EFL classrooms, through discussions and conversations that are more elaborated than those at lower levels. These elaborated conversations and negotiation with the teacher or peers would provide a chance for studying how well Egyptian students make use of politeness strategies when addressing people of different power relations, specifically when producing disagreements.

Another important rationale for the current research project is that pragmatics should be an integral part of English for specific purposes (ESP) classrooms, since ESP courses prepare students for the global job market by equipping them with the necessary skills in language learning. University students, who have international employment prospects, should have the necessary pragmatic competence to communicate with both native and nonnative speakers of English, whom they may encounter in workplaces in Egypt or other countries. The results of this research project may help point out issues related to pragmatics, specifically the problems that some students might have regarding the use of appropriate politeness strategies needed to mitigate their disagreements with interlocutors of different power relations. Consequently, the findings of this research project may direct teachers' attention to the

strategies needed to develop learners' pragmatic competence. It is widely accepted that successful communication does not merely depend on grammar and vocabulary, but also on pragmatic competence (Nureddeen, 2008).

1.2 Literature review

The very nature of power in linguistic interaction necessitates the use of politeness strategies. Brown and Gilman (2003) defined power as a relationship between at least two people, and in which one person has power over another to the extent that he/she may control the other's behaviour. Thus, since the exercise of power takes place in relationships, showing respect to another's self-esteem becomes mandatory in order to maintain social balance. Brown and Levinson's (1987) framework for politeness strategies could be well utilized to address these issues. The framework includes three strategies, positive and negative politeness as well as off-record strategies, which are all employed by the speaker (S) or the hearer (H) to soften face-threatening acts.

Many approaches have been developed to explain "politeness", but Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is considered the most influential. Their theory is based upon three important notions: face, face-threatening acts (FTA), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Face is defined as the image that a person gives to him/herself during interactions (Locher, 2004). Brown and Levinson (1987) further indicated that everyone has two face needs: positive face, which is the desire to be liked and supported, and negative face, which is the desire for freedom of action. These strategies are referred to by Locher (2004) as "involvement and independence" (p. 66). Brown and Levinson (1987) also proposed that both the S and the H tend to produce FTAs like disagreements or requests that might threaten both the interlocutor's positive and negative face of the interlocutor. For that reason, the S may

employ different politeness strategies to soften the threat resulting from an FTA (Niroomand, 2012). These strategies include positive politeness, which aims to show admiration to the Hs, negative politeness, which softens the imposition on the interlocutor, and off record politeness, which involves the use of indirect language. Brown and Levinson (1987) pointed out that the variables that determine the degree and strategies of politeness applied to the speech act are the social distance (D) of S and H and the power relation (P) of H and S.

Brown and Levinson's framework has been challenged by many researchers (e.g. Locher & Watts, 2005; Mao, 1994; Mill, 2004; Nwoye, 1992; Werkhofer, 1992). What Brown and Levinson (1987) viewed as universal has been regarded by others as "Anglo western". Some theorists have argued that their politeness theory is individualistic rather than group-oriented, that is why Mao (1994) and Mills (2004) argued that it cannot fit, for example, in Arab communities. Mursy and Wilson (2001) suggested that the notion of "face" can be defined in terms of social norms rather than individualistic expectations. For researchers such as Mursy and Wilson (2001), Mao (1994) and Mills (2004) it is the expectations of society that determine the politeness strategies employed by speakers. In this way, one can "retain politeness theory, with only minimal, and culturally sensitive, adjustments being required at the level of actual description" (Mursy & Wilson, 2001, p.137).

Although it was subjected to several critiques, Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory had been applied to many studies on face-to-face interaction. However, few studies of these studies discussed the politeness framework in relation to the educational context (Bacha, Bahous & Diab, 2012). Most of the studies about politeness in educational contexts have taken place in Asian settings and, investigated students' and teachers' politeness strategies in classrooms (Bell, 1998; Jiang, 2010;

Peng, Cai, & Tan, 2012). Students' use of politeness strategies with different FTAs has been investigated in U.S. academic settings (Rees-Miller, 2000; Sabee & Wilson, 2008).

Studies from the Arab world have investigated issues related to the effect of gender on L2 learners' perceptions of "politeness" in a university setting (Bacha, Bahous, & Diab, 2012), but only one study has explored teacher's politeness in Egyptian EFL classrooms (Soheim, 2014). In Soheim's (2014) exploratory study, she found that Egyptian teachers' politeness strategies in English composition classrooms at a private university were compared with those of their American counterparts. The current study is different in that it examines the effect of power relations on politeness strategies with regards to a specific speech act, which is disagreement, in Egyptian EFL classrooms.

Disagreement provides a platform upon which power and politeness can be studied and examined in the light of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. Most studies have defined disagreements as face-threatening acts. Kakava (1993) defined disagreement as "an oppositional stance (verbal or non-verbal) to an antecedent verbal (or non-verbal) action" (p.36). That is, when two or more people express their disagreement with a situation or an utterance either by speaking or gestures, it is more likely that disagreement will occur. Some researchers like Brown and Levinson (1987) as well as Wierzbicka (1991) viewed disagreements as face-threatening acts that affect the solidarity and involvement between S and H (as cited in Leech, 2007; Rees-Miller, 2000). Leech (2007) perceived disagreement as a dispreferred act that needs to be mitigated. Heritage (1984) stated that refusals and disagreements "are largely destructive of social solidarity" (as cited in Kakava, 2012, p. 1540). Given this, researchers have suggested that for disagreement to preserve

social relationships, it has to be mitigated to preserve both S's and H's face. Rees-Miller (2000) clarified that "[f]or the act of disagreement to occur in a way that preserves social harmony, the speaker may use partial agreement, colloquial language, and first person plural to redress the threat to the addressee's positive face" (p. 1089). She also indicated that "[u]se of interrogatives, hedges, and impersonal forms softens the threat to the addressee's negative face" (p. 1089).

Other studies have considered disagreements as supportive speech acts (e.g. Angouri & Locher, 2012; Kakava, 2012; Sifianou 2012). Schiffrin (1984) also suggested that disagreements can be regarded as a preferred speech act when they are used to solve problems. Kakava (2012) indicated that disagreement in a Greek context is considered a sociable act and "interactional ritual" (p. 1563), meaning that in arguments, disagreements are more expected than agreements and also they are preferred. Furthermore, Marra (2012) defined disagreement as "difference of opinion between two or more people" (p. 1561) and emphasized that in some communities disagreement reflects engagement and interaction and it is sometimes considered healthy. Fernandez (2013) suggested that the complexity of the speech act of disagreement lies in its dependence on the linguistic and social context. So what is considered a face threatening act in some contexts can be supportive in others.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are almost no studies that have explicitly investigated the speech act of disagreement in the Egyptian context; however, some research has focused on refusals, which are somewhat similar to disagreements (Al Batal & El Bakary, 2002; Morkus, 2009). Al Batal and El Bakary (2002) pointed out that Egyptians are reluctant to produce refusals when addressing people of higher status, which suggests their awareness of power relations. Morkus (2009) also posited that native Arabic speakers use indirect strategies in unequal

power relations and use more direct strategies in equal ones. This entails that refusal in the context of the Arab world are considered face-threatening acts that need to be softened when addressing people of higher power. However, there is almost no existing study that has explored the effect of power relations on politeness strategies and the production of disagreements in Egyptian EFL classrooms.

Disagreement strategies among native and nonnative speakers of English have been discussed in a number of studies. As for native speakers of English, Leech (2007) suggested that disagreements are mitigated by native speakers of English using a variety of strategies such as delay, hesitation, or the use of temporizing expressions such as "well". English speakers may also use partial disagreement such as "I agree, but" or hedges like "I would have thought ..." (Leech, 2007, p 187). As for nonnative speakers, some studies have shown that even non-native speakers such as Koreans who are linguistically capable of disagreeing refrain from expressing it especially with higher power interlocutors. This is because their continuous avoidance of disagreement resulted in their incapability of using appropriate politeness strategies to mitigate their disagreements. (Bell, 1998; Walkinshaw, 2007). In her study, Bell (1998) also indicated that when her Korean EFL students were disagreeing, they used simple disagreement strategies like exclamation or the bare negative exclamation "no". She also reported that her students mostly employed bald-on-record strategies when expressing disagreement with younger students. Her findings are partially in agreement with those of Kreutel (2007), who stated that nonnative speakers tend to use fewer mitigation devices.

Since the interaction between power and politeness strategies has not been adequately addressed in the Arab world and in the context of Egyptian EFL classrooms, further research is needed to explore this relationship. Furthermore, the

speech act of disagreement, a setting in which power and politeness can usefully be examined, has not been extensively discussed in the Egyptian literature, with the exception of the speech act of refusal, and therefore this study will address this gap by exploring the dynamics of power and politeness in disagreement among advanced Egyptian EFL learners.

1.3 Research questions

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How do Egyptian undergraduates express disagreement with their instructors from a politeness theory perspective?
2. Are there topic-or context-specific differences in the way these students express disagreement with their instructors?
3. How do Egyptian undergraduates express disagreement with their peers from a politeness theory perspective?
4. Are there any signs of the effect of factors such as the type of interactional activities or social distance on the way students disagree with their peers?

1.4 Definitions of terms

1.4.1 Theoretical definitions of terms and constructs

Face is defined by Brown and Levinson as the public self-image that every member of society wants to maintain (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Face-threatening acts are those that ignore the face needs of the addressees (Brown & Levinson 1987).

Positive politeness is defined as strategies that include three mechanisms. These three broad mechanisms are claiming common ground with H, conveying that "S and H are co-operators", and fulfilling H's wants (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 102).

Positive face is the need to maintain one's self-image by seeking approval and appreciation (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Negative politeness is defined as strategies that aim to soften imposition on the interlocutor (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Niroomand, 2012).

Negative face is one's need for freedom of action without any kind of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Off-record politeness is flouting one of the Gricean (1975) maxims on the assumption that the hearer will infer the intended meaning (Niroomand, 2012). It is the use of indirect language to avoid imposition on others (Brown & Levinson, 1987).

Disagreement is defined by Pomerantz (1984) as an interlocutor's opposition to the speaker (as cited in Walkinshaw, 2007).

Aggravated disagreements "are activities that participants work to achieve in their own right, as evidenced by features such as intonation contours, turn shapes and patterning in sequences of talk which display rather than put off the expression of opposition" (Goodwin, 1983, p. 675). Aggravated disagreement are also marked in Rees-Miller's (2000) study by intensifiers, personal accusatory "you" and rhetorical questions.

Power is defined as the relationship in which one person limits the other's social freedom and controls his/her behaviour (Brown & Gilman, 2003; van Dijk, 1989).

1.4.2 Operational definitions of terms and constructs

Face-threatening acts refer to acts that either hinder a student's freedom of expressing his/ her opinion or show disapproval of the instructor's opinion. Refusals, requests, and disagreements are examples of face-threatening acts.

Positive politeness in interactions which involve disagreement refers to the strategies that show involvement and solidarity, such as beginning disagreement with "professor, sir,..." or using token agreements like "yes, but" Or hedges such as "I think that ...".

Positive face: refers to students' or teachers' need for their opinions to be approved of and respected. For instance, an interlocutor's need for positive face might be inferred if the instructor or the students seek agreement with their own opinion or a claim of common ground in order to preserve their positive face. Students also tend to seek their peer's approval of their opinions or their own actions in a classroom. This implies that a student's nonverbal gestures to simply express his/her objection to the teacher's suggestion of working with other students might threaten his/her peers' positive face or the teacher's positive face.

Negative politeness refers to the strategies that reflect respect for freedom and independence of one's interlocutor, such as using questioning when disagreeing "would you think that....?" or stating disagreement as a personal opinion that does not impose one's point of view on the interlocutor.

Negative face refers to the fact the teachers' and the students' need for negative face might be inferred if they do not want to be distracted and to have freedom to express their points of view, without any kind of imposition. Thus, a student justifying his/her disagreement by saying "I don't agree because . . ." is an example of preserving the

teacher's negative face and giving him/her the right to clear misunderstandings and vague points.

Off-record strategy refers to the strategies that show disagreement in an ambiguous manner. Hinting is an example of such strategies. For example a student might indirectly disagree with the teacher by saying "You are always right, but I used this style before in writing and it was ok with other teachers".

Disagreement is operationally defined as students showing opposition to their teacher or their peers' suggestions or ideas, either verbally or non-verbally. There are a number of strategies that are used by the speaker to deliver an opposing point of view. Disagreement can be expressed through partial agreement, questions, and contradictory statements. It can also be nonverbal through gestures or facial expressions.

Aggravated disagreements refer to disagreements that have sarcastic or challenging tone. They also refer to the use of some L1 and L2 discourse markers that strengthen the force of disagreement such as "of course".

Power refers to the relationship between the teachers and the students, in which the teacher has power over the students due to various factors such as academic position, knowledge, and age. The teacher, in the case of the current study, is the power superior because she is the one responsible for assigning students' grades, and because of her academic position as a university professor. Power also refers to the relationship between the students and their peers. In the case of a university classroom setting, students have equal power relations because they are of the same age and of the same English proficiency level. However, some students might have a kind of power over their peers because of being high achievers and having well-developed

argumentative skills which make use of appropriate politeness strategies. This was only verified with two cases in the current study by students' responses during the interview or classroom interaction.

1.5 Delimitations of the study

The current study primarily focuses on teachers and learners who belong to one setting, Business school at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport. The Arab Academy, which is a private university, is located in the governorate of Alexandria, the second biggest city in Egypt, which means that the researcher will not be able to generalize the findings to a larger population. The study focuses on one speech act, disagreement, and what politeness strategies are employed in the accomplishment of this speech act in the classroom context. Thus, this study does not tackle other speech acts and factors that might affect the use of politeness strategies in the act of disagreement, such as proficiency levels, different age groups, or gender.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

There are many instances of disagreement in every-day settings (Sifianou, 2012). It is important to pay special attention to this speech act as it is an important domain in which the interface of power and politeness can be examined (Locher, 2004). With the help of discourse analysis, the current research examines how power and politeness strategies are displayed in the speech act of disagreement in EFL classroom interactions. In addition, other factors that govern the production of this speech act will be considered in the data analysis section. This chapter provides a review of the literature for the two frameworks that were used for analysis: discourse analysis and Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. In addition, the relevant literature on power and disagreement are further discussed in this chapter.

2.2 Brown & Levinson's (1987) politeness framework

Politeness has been a rich area for investigation for nearly 30 years. Many approaches have been developed to examine and define politeness, which according to Locher (2004), has gained its popularity and thereby captivated many researchers due to several factors, such as the absence of a precise definition. Thus, many researchers have searched for a politeness theory that is universal that could be applied in different contexts and situations. Among the popular theories of politeness are the conversational-maxim view and Leech's (1983) politeness principle (as cited in Locher, 2004). However, the current study uses the most influential politeness theory which was developed by Brown and Levinson (1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) used Goffman's (1967) notion of face as a starting point for their face-saving view of politeness. Goffman (1967) defined face as the positive public self-image that the individual tries to claim for him/herself (as cited in Derek, 2008). The theory is

based upon three important notions: face, face-threatening acts (FTA), and politeness strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Brown and Levinson (1987) claimed that everyone has two face needs, positive and negative. These are also referred to by Locher (2004) as "involvement and independence" (p. 66). Brown and Levinson (1987) also proposed that both the speaker and the interlocutor tend to produce FTAs like disagreements or requests that might threaten both the hearer's positive and negative face. For that reason, the speaker may employ different politeness strategies to soften the threat that results from an FTA (Niroomand, 2012). These strategies are: positive politeness, negative politeness, and off-record politeness which is an indirect strategy that assumes H will infer the intended meaning (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Cutting, 2002). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the variables that determine the amount of politeness applied to the speech act and the speakers' choice of strategy are: social distance and power relation.

2.2.1 Critiques of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim about the universality of their theory has been criticized by a number of researchers (e.g. Locher & Watts, 2005; Nwoye, 1992; Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1988; Tracy, 1990; Werkhofer, 1992). For example, Matsumoto (1988) and Tracy (1990) believed that in societies like Japan, people have rights and obligations toward other society members. The use of formulaic expression that a non-Japanese person might regard as imposition will be acceptable in Japan when they come from someone of higher rank. In fact, these researchers who are mostly from East Asia assert that politeness is a form of social behaviour that is governed by the social needs of the group rather than the individual, as in the European societies

(Mao, 1994; Matsumoto, 1988; Tracy, 1990). Werkhofer (1992) also argued that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory is individualistic as it gives the impression that the speaker is unconstrained by social norms and is thus free to select aggressive intentions.

Although the applicability of Brown and Levinson (1987) has not been extensively addressed in the Egyptian literature, Mursy and Wilson (2001) stated that it might not be appropriate in this context. Mursy and Wilson (2001) pointed out that Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory contains elements of "western ethnocentrism", and so it faces several challenges when it is applied in eastern societies like Egypt, where the group has precedence over the individual, whose face needs are prioritized in western societies. Thus, he suggested that the notion of "face" can be defined in terms of social norms rather than individualistic expectations, meaning that societal expectations determine the politeness strategies that should be employed by the speakers. In this way, one can "retain politeness theory, with only minimal, and culturally sensitive, adjustments being required at the level of actual description" (Mursy & Wilson, 2001, p. 137).

2.3 Politeness in the educational context

Although learning and using politeness strategies is an integral aspect of L2 pragmatics (Niroomand, 2013), very few studies have addressed them in educational settings ((Bacha, Bahous, & Diab, 2012). The majority of studies focusing on politeness have taken place in the East Asian context (e.g. Jiang, 2010; Peng, Cai, & Tan, 2012). In these studies, Chinese teachers employed the four politeness strategies, with positive strategies making up the greatest portion of them.

A recent study by Sabee and Wilson (2008) investigated American university students' primary goals, attributions, and face-threatening acts as they discussed their disappointing grades with their teacher. The study involved 234 under graduates, who reported on conversations with their teachers about low grades, and the findings revealed four primary goals: learning, persuading, fighting, and impressing, all of which played a major role in deciding what politeness strategies the students employed. For instance, students with "impressing" goals threatened both their face and the instructor's face. Perhaps, one of the limitations of this study was that the researchers depended on self-reported data, i.e. the students were the ones to describe situations when they nagged with their professors about their low test scores. This methodology, in fact, might have given some students the chance to fake situations, and thus resulting in less reliable data.

Another study about the degree of politeness that genders indicate to certain situations at a Lebanese university showed that the politeness is strongly tied to context (Bacha, Bahous, & Diab, 2012). In the previous study, students were asked to fill in a survey and DCTs with different classroom situations to know their perception of what is polite or impolite. The study revealed that gender reacted differently to situations in ESL classrooms. Furthermore, this study was one of the research efforts that challenged Brown and Levinson's theory. Bacha et al. (2012) argued that what is considered polite in one culture might not be regarded the same in another context. This aligns with Mursy's (2009) views about face and politeness strategies, and that societal expectations decide what politeness strategies should be employed by the speaker (S) to preserve the interlocutor's face, whose face needs are derived from social norms rather than individualistic presuppositions. Here, it should be noted that

the study did not discuss how students invoke or use politeness strategies, however, it only examined the student's perceptions of situations that mainly represented the lay concept of "politeness" and "being polite" which are different from using politeness strategies.

2.3.1 Politeness strategies in the Egyptian educational context. Only one study, conducted by Soheim (2014), examined politeness strategies in the Egyptian educational context. This study compared the politeness strategies employed by five Egyptian teachers working at the American University in Cairo with those used by American teachers working for the same institution. The researcher mainly used audio-taping for data collection, and semi-structured interviews with the participating teachers revealed that they preferred to use positive politeness in their classrooms. The findings about Egyptian teachers agree with those of previous researches done in East Asian contexts. Soheim (2014) also, discovered that Egyptian teachers use more positive politeness strategies in their English composition classrooms than their American colleagues. On the other hand, American teachers working at AUC use negative politeness strategies a great deal as a result of their cultural background, which is not in favour of imposition. Based on interviews, the researcher found that the types of politeness strategies that the teachers used were determined by the expectations that they brought into their classrooms concerning their students and their own experiences. In relation to the current study, this suggests that Egyptian instructors might respond to student's disagreement with the use of positive politeness strategies.

2.4 An overview of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis (DA) emerged in the work of different disciplines like linguistics and psychology in the 1960s and 1970s, and it is mainly concerned with studying language in relation to the context in which it occurs (McCarthy, 1991). Researchers who use DA as a framework are interested in studying language in use in written and spoken texts (McCarthy, 1991). Brown and Yule (1983) further indicated that discourse analysts are interested in finding regularities in their data. In his book *An Introduction to Discourse Analysis* Coulthard (1985) highlighted another main concern of DA which is the correlation between the discourse and social relationships. That is, how the relationship between the speaker and the hearer affects the way they talk, and also how non-verbal cues can be conditioned by such a relationship. All in all, DA is concerned with studying authentic language in a naturally occurring setting. Thus, with regards to an educational context, DA can be of great benefit for teachers who are willing to adapt their materials based on what their students really do with the language (Coulthard, 1985).

Many different approaches exist under the umbrella of discourse analysis. Some of them are concerned with the content of the language, while others place more focus on the structure of the language being used, like grammar, and how this structure implies a specific meaning in the specific context in which it is being used (Paul Gee, 2010).

Pragmatics is an area that involves contextualizing the language that is being used (Cutting, 2002). It pays special attention to how people use the language and what they are doing. Furthermore, Brown and Yule (1983) argued that performing DA involves the implementation of pragmatics. Pragmatics and discourse analysis (DA) both examine utterances in relation to the physical world, social relationships, and

even the time and place in which words occur (Cutting, 2002). With regards to the present study, DA and pragmatics are used to contextualize disagreement utterances. Information about participants and the contexts, in which disagreements occurred, are considered in order to infer the intentions of the speakers, especially if they selected specific disagreement strategy, and the underlying factors behind their disagreements. Furthermore, elements of discourse and discourse markers are carefully examined to have a better understanding of how the students formed disagreements and how the teachers and peers responded to such disagreements, which might help offer a valid interpretation of the threats the Hs were exposed to and how politeness strategies used lessen them.

2.5 Definitions of power and its interface with politeness strategies

Power is a social phenomenon that is usually revealed whenever two or more people are interacting together. In other words, power is common in everyday social practices (Derek & Locher, 2008; Fairclough, 1992; Locher, 2004). It is clear that power has been an area of interest to many researchers for years. For instance Dahl (1957) defined power through the following examples "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something B would not otherwise do" (as cited in Locher, 2004, p. 15). This coincides with other definitions such as that of van Dijk (1989), who defined power as a relationship between at least two people in which one person limits the other's freedom of action. Another definition of power was that proposed by Wartenberg (1990) "a social agent A has power over a social agent B if and only if A strategically constraints B's action-environment" (as cited in Locher, 2004, p. 21). In the case of a university setting, professors have power over their students based on their knowledge, age, job position and their responsibility of assigning grades (Rees-Miller, 2000; Walkinshaw, 2007). To sum up, Mehan (2009)

stated (as cited in Locher, 2004) that power is derived from group membership status, and thus, the students belong to one group which has a lower status than the professors' group which is of a higher status one. The previous definitions imply that power is somehow static and fixed. However, power is regarded by numerous scholars as "relational work" (Locher, 2004, p. 4) that involves at least two interactants who may switch roles in regards to power (Derek & Locher, 2008). So, for example, speakers of lower status can exercise power over the hearers in some cases. That is, they can challenge people of higher status to achieve certain goals. This can be evident in a student-centred classroom where students share the responsibility of their own learning and sometimes use this privilege to exercise power over their teachers to impress them. Therefore, raising student's awareness of power differences and showing respect to others' face needs becomes mandatory.

2.5.1 Power in the educational context. Although power is common in interpersonal interaction, it has not been extensively addressed in the educational context. Only a few studies have focused on power relations and their interface with politeness strategies in the ESL classroom (Niroomand, 2013; Rees-Miller, 2000; Walkinshaw, 2007). According to Rees-Miller's (2000) study which examined natural classroom interaction, Brown and Levinson's (1987) variables such as power do affect the expression of disagreement but power was not necessarily the central variable. This is due to the fact that professors regarded disagreement as face enhancing as a face threatening act. In other words, disagreement in a classroom setting shows engagement, critical thinking and understanding of the content matter. This result is in line with Marra (2012) who perceives disagreement as a sign of engagement and involvement. The role of power was very evident in Rees-Miller's (2000) study through the professor's use of positive politeness markers when disagreeing in order

to mask power and establish rapport with the students. On the other hand, the students' use of less positive and inclusive markers when addressing their professors showed that power differences were taken into consideration. This slightly differs from what Walkinshaw (2007) found regarding teacher-student relationships in a Japanese context. Walkinshaw (2007) emphasized the very important role that power played in this relationship as well as its impact on the students' expression of disagreement in classroom. Here, the students refrained from disagreeing with their teacher who might penalize them for his/her face loss, even though they were capable of using complex disagreement strategies with power equals. In the Iranian context, Niroomand (2012) used written DCTs with his upper-intermediate students. The results showed that the students were sensitive toward power and the status of their interlocutors. To sum up, power differences has its effect on the expression of FTAs like disagreement.

2.6 The speech act of disagreement

Disagreements are part and parcel of our social interactions (Sifianou, 2012.). No matter what one does, one cannot avoid performing this speech act to show opposition or defend their stance. But unlike other speech acts such apologies, requests, and refusals this speech act has received little attention in the literature. Lawson(2009) stated that "given the importance of learning how to express one's discord effectively through the medium of the target language, there has, to date, been a relative paucity of research into how nonnative speakers of English express disagreement in informal discussion" (p. 4). Nevertheless, "the landscape is not as barren as it may seem" (Maiz, 2014, p. 202); some studies exist that have tackled the speech act of disagreement and shed light on its complexity.

Disagreement is defined by Rees-Miller (2000) as "A Speaker S disagrees when s/he considers untrue some Proposition P uttered or presumed to be espoused by an Addressee A and reacts with an utterance the propositional content or implicature of which is Not P" (p. 1088). Furthermore, a number of scholars have placed disagreements under the umbrella of opposition, meaning that disagreement occurs when two speakers have different points of view about a specific topic (Kavaka, 2012; McCrae, 2009; Pomerantz, 1983). McCare (2009) postulated that when people disagree they get in to an argument either to challenge or to support a certain point of view. Other researchers have also indicated that disagreements are not always expressed only verbally; gestures and non-verbal signs can be used to show opposition or disagreement (Kavaka, 2012; Rees-Miller, 2000).

Angouri and Locher (2012) discussed the speech act of disagreements with regards to form. In their study they have categorized disagreements as explicit vs. implicit and mitigated vs. unmitigated. They pointed out that disagreement should be studied in situations when relationships are negotiated, and thereby the primary focus of researchers who are interested in investigating disagreement, should be on how it is achieved and the consequences of using different forms of disagreement on interlocutors' face. This will ultimately lead to consideration of various forms of disagreements and whether these forms "contribute to face-aggravating, face-maintaining, or face-enhancing effects.

There are many strategies through which the speech act of disagreement is expressed. For instance, in order to maintain social harmony, Lakoff (1973) (as cited in Rees-Miller, 2000) and Brown and Levinson (1987) indicated that the speaker may use any of the following strategies: partial agreement, colloquial language, and first person plural to redress the threat to the addressee's positive face. In addition Lakoff

(1973) (as cited in Rees-Miller, 2000) and Brown and Levinson (1987) emphasized that there are other strategies that redress the threat to the interlocutors negative face: including the use of questions, hedges, and impersonal forms.

2.6.1 Disagreement as an FTA. Disagreements have also been tackled in the literature with regards to Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), disagreement is an FTA that needs to be redressed and mitigated. Rees-Miller (2000) added another term, which is severe disagreement, which she clarified as a form of disagreement that threatens the interlocutor's identity, whether it is personal or professional.

Many researchers have considered disagreement as an FTA (Brown & Levinson 1987; Leech, 2007). Also, Wierzbicka (1991) viewed disagreements as face-threatening acts that affect the solidarity and involvement between the speaker and the hearer (as cited in Leech, 2007; Rees-Millers, 2000). Leech (2007) perceived disagreements as dispreferred acts that need to be mitigated. Furthermore, Heritage (1984) stated that refusal and disagreement “are largely destructive of social solidarity” (as cited in Kakava, 2012, p. 1540). Finally, Sifianou (2012) added that it is reasonable enough to think of disagreements as positive face-threatening acts as they deny the existence of common ground between the speaker and the hearer.

2.6.2 Disagreement as a face enhancing speech act. Tannen (1981, 1998) posited that disagreement can be a required feature in some contexts, meaning that disagreements might, in fact, be the norm in these locations (as cited in Angouri & Locher, 2008). Sifianou (2012) explained that disagreement not only differs from one context to another but, also differs among cultures. So, while Americans are more in favour of agreement, Australians prefer disagreement, which they view as a sign of

liveliness and interaction. Sifianou (2012) also pointed out that disagreement is evaluated differently according to the S's and H's personality, which refutes Brown and Levinson's (1987) claim to universality, which depends mainly on the mitigation of face-threatening acts.

Furthermore, disagreement was regarded positively in many other works (e.g. Angouri & Locher, 2012; Kakava, 2012; Marra, 2012; Sifinaou, 2012). Kakava (2012) indicated that disagreement in a Greek-context is considered a sociable act. Furthermore, Marra (2012), who defined disagreement as a "difference of opinion between two or more people" (p. 1561), emphasized that in some communities disagreements reflect engagement and interaction and are; thus, considered to be healthy. Sifianou (2012) also added that in some contexts disagreements might be considered as face enhancing acts, especially when they are used to show the negotiation skills of the speaker or to reflect his/her self-affirmation. She indicated that disagreements can reflect the creativity of the speaker when they occur in problem-solving group discussions.

2.6.3 Disagreements in the Egyptian context. Almost no studies have explicitly investigated the speech act of disagreement in the Egyptian context (Fernandez, 2013). However, refusals, which share common aspects with disagreements, have been the subject of a few studies (Al Batal and El Bakary, 2002; Morkus, 2009). Al Batal and El Bakary (2002) pointed out that Egyptians are reluctant to refuse when addressing people of higher status, which suggests their awareness of power relations. Furthermore, Morkus (2009) found that native speakers of Arabic use indirect strategies with unequal power relations and more direct strategies with their equals. This entails that refusals in the Arab world are considered face-threatening acts that need to be softened when one is addressing people of higher

power. However, no existing study has explored the effect of power relations on politeness strategies and the production of disagreements in Egyptian EFL classrooms.

There is only one study in Egypt that has investigated the speech act of disagreement in computer-mediated communication. Fernandez (2013) conducted a cross-cultural study in which she explored how English-speaking Americans and Egyptians with advanced proficiency levels perform the speech act of disagreement on social networks like Facebook. The researcher found that Egyptians used mitigated disagreements, such as token agreements and hedges, more than Americans did. She emphasized that Egyptians, like Americans, made use of more mitigated disagreement when discussing controversial topics. However, the results of this study should be cautiously considered due to the very special nature of the context, which is Facebook. This aligns with Bolander (2012), who emphasized that several factors like the participants' relationships, goals and purposes have their impact on the construction of agreement and disagreement.

2.6.4 Disagreement in the educational context. The speech act of disagreement has not been adequately addressed in ESL classrooms. Most of the studies that investigated this speech act have taken place in American, East Asian, and Iranian contexts (e.g. Farahani & Molkizadeh, 2013; Heidari, Eslami-Rasekh & Simin, 2014; Niroomand, 2012; Rees-Miller, 2000). Rees-Miller (2000) pointed out that some differences in the linguistic markers used for disagreement are related to unequal power relationships. She also indicated that professors tend to use positive politeness strategies while disagreeing with their students. In his study, Walkinshaw (2007) emphasized that Japanese learners tend to avoid disagreements with power unequals, but that, they use hedging and more complicated strategies when

disagreeing with power equals. In other studies that investigated disagreement in relation to gender and politeness strategies through written DCTs, Farahani and Molkizadeh (2013) reported no statistical difference in the politeness strategies employed by both male and female learners with advanced proficiency levels. In contrast, Heidari, Eslami-Rasekh and Simin (2014) indicated that females might use more indirect strategies than males when disagreeing due to the conservative nature of Iran. However, both of them prefer not to use confrontational disagreements with people at higher status.

The studies discussed in the previous section showed that power relations in the classroom environment had an effect on the disagreement strategies employed by both the learners and the instructors. The present study will use an Egyptian classroom as a new context for studying the effect of power relations on students' disagreements in classroom.

2.7 Classification of disagreement expressions

Disagreement expressions have been classified in different ways by different authors. One such classification is the Rees-Miller's (2000) taxonomy, which the current study uses as analysis framework for disagreement expressions. One of the reasons for choosing this taxonomy is that it offers a variety of strategies through which disagreement is expressed and it works under the umbrella of Brown and Levinson's (1987) classical work, which is also the main framework for this study. Her continuum comprises three types of disagreement: softened disagreement (either using positive or negative politeness), neither softened nor strengthened disagreement (without any mitigation at all), and aggravated disagreement (conflicting discourse).

Softened disagreement, as described by Rees-Miller (2000), is further divided into positive politeness, which includes linguistic markers that show solidarity like humour, and negative politeness strategies like the use of questions, or the verbs of uncertainty. The second category, i.e. unmodified disagreement, includes contradictory statements which are neither softened nor strengthened disagreement. The last type, i.e. aggravated disagreement, is done through rhetorical questions, judgmental vocabulary, and intensifiers.

The present study also adds strategies from Muntigl and Turnbull's disagreement taxonomy (1998) to Rees-Miller's (2000) three broad categories. Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) classified disagreement into four strategies: counterclaims, contradictions, challenging, and irrelevancy claims. Irrelevancy claims, which are the most aggravated strategies for expressing disagreement was defined as disagreeing with the H by showing that he/she is off topic (Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998). Another aggravated form of disagreeing is challenging, through which the S challenges the H to provide support for his argument. Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) defined contradictions as explicit opposition to the H's claim by using the negative particle "no" or positive particle "yes". On the other hand, counterclaims are the most mitigated form of disagreement, through which the S does not show explicit contradiction to the H's claim. Instead, counterclaims propose an alternative suggestion or argument (Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998).

2.8 Disagreement strategies

A number of studies have shown that native and nonnative speakers of English use different strategies when producing disagreement. The following two sections show the various disagreement strategies used by both native and nonnative speakers in different studies that focused on this particular speech act.

2.8.1 Native speakers' strategies. Disagreement strategies among native and nonnative speakers of English have been discussed in a number of studies. As for native speakers of English, Leech (2007) suggested that disagreement is mitigated by native speakers of English through the use of variety of strategies like delay, hesitation, or temporizing expressions such as "well". English speakers may also use hedges like "I would have thought ..." (Leech, 2007, p. 187). Token agreements like "I agree.....but" are also one of the most frequently used strategies by native speakers (Maiz-Arevalo, 2014, p. 212). Other scholars like Bardovi and Salsbury (2004) confirmed that native speakers use indirect and more complicated strategies of disagreements (as cited in Maiz-Arevalo, 2014). However, Lawson (2009), who used recorded interviews to draw a comparison between the disagreement strategies performed by 30 Japanese speakers of English working in different fields and native speakers of English, discovered that direct disagreements like "I disagree" are frequently performed by native speakers. Thus, as Maiz-Arevalo (2014) pointed out, one has to be careful when drawing generalizations with regards to complex speech act like disagreements.

2.8.2 Nonnative speakers of English. As for non-native speakers of English, some studies have shown that even non-native speakers, who are linguistically capable of disagreeing, refrain from doing so especially with higher power interlocutors (Bell, 1998; Walkinshaw, 2007). Bell (1998) also indicated that her South Korean EFL students, who had been living in the U.S for four months, used simple disagreement strategies when addressing their teacher, such as exclamations or the bare negative exclamation "no". Bell (1998) clarified that the students mostly employed bald-on- record strategies when expressing disagreement toward their younger peers. Kreutel (2007) stated that non-native speakers drawn from ten

different countries used fewer mitigation devices in response to written DCTs due to their lack of pragmatic competence. Thus, according to the previous studies, it is clear that learners' insufficient pragmatic competence or their awareness of power relations are crucial factors in their construction or production of disagreement. In other words, EFL learners might use simple disagreements that lack mitigation devices or refrain from expressing disagreement altogether due to two main reasons: a lack of pragmatic competence, or their being sensitive to power differences, especially if they are addressing power superiors.

2.9 Conclusion.

According to the literature reviewed in this chapter, it is clear that the interaction between power and politeness strategies has not been adequately addressed in the context of Egyptian EFL classrooms, and thus, further research is needed to explore this complicated relationship. Furthermore, the speech act of disagreement, which provides a platform in which power and politeness can be examined, has not been discussed extensively in the Egyptian literature except for the speech act of refusal. The current research highlights the importance of studying disagreements in ESL among advanced Egyptian students, who are encouraged to show opposition to their instructors due to their over confidence in their proficiency levels. In classroom discussions the students, who are mostly at a B2, and C1 proficiency level according to the Cambridge placement test, get very heated in classroom debates that include both their teachers and their peers; this, in fact, creates an opportunity to show how power is exercised and negotiated through disagreement. The classrooms that were observed for the present study, which were specifically ESP classes, prepare students for the global job market through their focus on the English language, which is a basic requirement for any job posting worldwide.

Therefore with the aid of DA, which is used to analyse transcripts of disagreements and recorded interviews by understanding the context in which disagreements took place and exploring what was said in response and why, this study narrows the gap by exploring the dynamics of power and politeness in disagreement among advanced Egyptian EFL learners. The study also uncovers other factors that have a role in the production of this speech act.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The current study looked into the relationship between power and disagreement within an Egyptian private university setting. This chapter outlines and summarizes the methodology used during the research. First, the research design, descriptions of the participants and the instruments are provided. The next section offers a detailed account of data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.2 Research design

The current study is exploratory in nature since it provides insights into the underlying factors that govern the students' use of politeness strategies in their realization of disagreement. The study also examines how variables such as power differences and social distance influence the politeness strategies that students use when expressing disagreement. Given that the current research is more concerned with studying spontaneous disagreements within classroom interaction and offers deeper analysis to different disagreement utterances with regards to the context in which they occur, a qualitative approach was adopted for the present research project.

3.3 Participants

The present study involved students from the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport where the researcher is currently an ESP instructor. Students at the Arab Academy who are majoring in fields such as business, tourism, engineering, logistics, computer science, and maritime science are required to take ESP classes as part of their undergraduate degrees. The researcher observed 54 students in two businesses English classrooms; the level of these classes was advanced; students' proficiency levels ranged from B2 to C1 on the CEFR scale as determined by Cambridge placement test scores.

Given the qualitative nature of this research project, the above-mentioned participants constituted a purposive sample. This means that they are non-representative of a larger population. A purposive sample can provide an understanding and in-depth analysis of how power influences disagreements and politeness strategies among advanced Egyptian students within the context of the Academy but the findings may not be generalizable to the larger population.

Table 3.1 introduces the total number of students in the two classrooms that were observed. The interaction between 54 students, 22 males and 32 females, was videotaped to capture occurrences of disagreement.

Table 3.1 Profiles of student participants

Class	Number	Males	Females
Business English 1	29	10	19
Business English 2	25	12	13
Total	54	22	32

3.4 Setting

Classrooms were selected as the locus of the study because they are contexts in which power can be observed. Professors hold power over their students because of their knowledge, age, and academic position, as well as their responsibility for assigning grades (Rees-Miller, 2002). Even among students who are almost equal there will still be some negotiation of power and politeness (Locher, 2004).

The setting in which observations took place is a private university in which classes include a fewer number of students in comparison to public universities in Egypt. As a result, the few number of students in each class have the privilege of having more discussions and more elaborated conversations with their peers and

professors than public university students. For this reason, the negotiation of power and politeness strategies was easily observed in such classrooms.

The researcher paid six visits to two Business English classrooms each over a period of three weeks, with a total of 18 hours of observation. Three sessions of these classes were dedicated to vocabulary and reading, that was integrated with speaking and listening. In reading classes the teacher attempted to personalize reading texts and express how they feel toward some ideas that were discussed in the reading text. The teachers also gave the students the chance to summarize paragraphs and discuss the main ideas; this resulted in much discussion and negotiation among peers and between students and teachers from which the researcher transcribed many instances of disagreements. Instances of disagreement also arose in situations when the teachers were interested in making students use newly acquired vocabulary items in speaking activities. Grammar lessons were given in the other three classes, and despite the fact that grammar lessons were less interactive than the vocabulary and reading classes as the teacher regulated most of the talk, some students expressed disagreement with their instructor about grammatical issues.

3.5 Pilot studies

Before collecting operational data, the study instruments were piloted three times in the Fall 2014, Spring 2015, and Fall 2015 semesters in order to ensure the appropriateness of the data collection tools for the study participants.

3.5.1 Pilot study (1) Fall 2014. This study was piloted among the students of the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport. The small sample, which constituted about 30 students, was given discourse completion tasks (DCTs), adapted from Niroomand (2012), containing six scenarios. The students

responded to the scenarios by expressing disagreements toward persons of different power relations such as a university professor, a classmate and a younger sister. Due to the DCTs' inability to reflect spontaneous responses, the researcher preferred to carry out another pilot study using videotaping to capture natural verbal and non-verbal disagreements.

3.5.2 Pilot study (2) Spring 2015. The main focus of this study was to pilot the four data collection instruments before beginning data collection. To achieve this aim, participants' age, proficiency level, and instructional setting were relatively similar to those of the current study. The Arab Academy students selected for piloting were all advanced learners of English who joined an ESP class after scoring from 80-100 on the Cambridge placement test. Seven advanced students agreed to take part in the pilot study. All of them were majoring in computer science and taking an ESP 2 course, which is an area of teaching English for computer science students, to fulfill the requirement of their second semester. The students, who ranged from 18-23 years old, were all males except for two females. The piloting took place during one hour of break time preceding their actual ESP-II class, which students normally take in their second semester and that is why it is called ESP-II. Students, who were videotaped, provided their opinions and had discussions about different topics for half an hour.

The pilot study resulted in some vital modifications to the proposed instruments, which ensured that they were well-developed and ready to be used in the actual research. One example of modifications was with the interview questions, which were slightly changed during the official data collection stage. Since occurrences of disagreement in the pilot study were not analysed or transcribed before piloting the interview questions, the researcher did not have the chance to ask the students about the reasons behind their use of particular disagreement strategies.

Consequently, that was highly considered in the actual data collection procedures as the researcher asked many of the students to explain their pragmatic choices and how they feel about the disagreement strategies they used with both their teachers and peers, which provided in-depth information about the students' choices during classroom interactions. Another modification was with one of the questions in the demographic data survey e.g. "Have you had the chance to study English outside of the classroom?" .The phrase "outside of the classroom" was very confusing and therefore the researcher replaced this phrase with the following: "an English-speaking country."

3.5.3 Pilot study (3) Fall 2015. At this stage the researcher piloted the observation protocol and made notes on disagreements among students in 2 hours of a graduate level class during the Fall semester 2015. That was an important stage which helped the researcher develop note-taking strategies that facilitated the transcription and analysis of disagreement during the official study. The researcher, for example, took notes on the disagreement and its context, noted the Ss' and Hs' facial expressions, and the time at which the disagreements occurred. Therefore, the researcher was able to extract the excerpts that needed to be transcribed from the recordings without exerting extra effort watching parts of the recordings that were not useful for the purpose of the study.

3.6 Instruments

The present research adopted a qualitative approach and utilized three instruments: a demographic data survey, a sociogram of peer relations in the classroom, and a follow-up interview with ten of the student participants. Since the data was collected from human participants, specifically teachers and students, an

institutional review board (IRB) approval and informed consent was obtained from the participants before data collection procedures were conducted.

3.6.1 Demographic data survey. Since the study was intended only for Egyptian undergraduates with nonnative but advanced English proficiency level, a questionnaire about their linguistic background (Appendix A) was important to ensure that none of the student participants had native or near-native English proficiency level or pragmatic competence. For that reason, students were asked several questions, adapted from Niroomand (2012), about the environment they lived in and whether or not they were exposed to a foreign culture, especially an English-speaking one. Accordingly, five students were excluded from the study; two of them had lived in the USA for about 10 years, and the other three had been taught by native speakers of English in their international schools in Saudi Arabia.

3.6.2 Sociogram (<http://groupdynamics.en.softonic.com/>). A sociogram is a diagram of interpersonal relationships that was used in this study to represent a student's relationship with each of his/her classmates. One justification for the use of a sociogram in this study was to help evaluate the social distance between classmates, who are almost power equals, through a visual depiction for their answers to a series of questions (Appendix D). Social distance (D) between power equals can have an impact on their disagreement strategies. Indeed, interpersonal relationships can have an impact on the outcome of interaction in a classroom environment.

3.6.3 Semi-structured interviews. The aim behind choosing this data collection method was to gather in-depth information about the students' motives for disagreeing with their instructors as well as their peers. Interviews were conducted with 10 students (Appendix E). Gender balance and the frequency of disagreement

produced by the participants served as a criterion in choosing the students to be interviewed. In other words, five males and five females were chosen to be interviewed and both students who frequently disagreed and students who were reluctant to express disagreement were interviewed to have an idea of the underlying factors behind their production or avoidance of disagreement. The researcher mainly asked questions about the strategies students used when disagreeing in situations of different power relations in the classroom context. Determining whether close or distant social distance between peers affects the way they disagree with one was a main goal of interviews. Students who expressed disagreement frequently were shown parts of the video in which they expressed disagreement and they were asked about the motives behind their disagreement and the strategies they used.

3.7 Data collection procedures

Natural data are known to be reliable and authentic, and therefore they are widely used in pragmatics and sociolinguistic research (Yuan, 2001). Given the study purpose, the researcher collected spontaneous disagreements by observing ESP classrooms using an observation protocol (Appendix B). The two advanced business English classrooms at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport, which included 54 students, were videotaped twice a week for an hour and half each over a period of three weeks, totaling 18 hours of observation. However, natural data collection is not without its shortcomings. One of the disadvantages of natural data collection is that there is no guarantee that the required speech act will occur or that enough tokens will be produced (Yuan, 2001). Therefore the researcher planned to employ a conversation elicitation task inspired by Nguyen's (2008) work (Appendix C). However, the researcher ended up not using the elicitation tasks she had prepared beforehand because the classroom teachers preferred to implement two

speaking techniques: a debate and a whole classroom discussion about topics more relevant to the themes they discussed. The topics the teacher chose, in fact, did have an effect on the way students expressed disagreements and the politeness strategies they employed. According to Locher (2004) one of the factors that influences disagreement can be the topic of interaction, especially if it is quite controversial. The researcher transcribed and coded all occurrences of disagreement that resulted from students' discussion of controversial topics with their teachers and peers.

To answer the research questions the researcher used the following procedures:

On the first day, the researcher explained to the students that she would observe their participation in class and video tape their interactions. Students' and teachers' consent to participation, observation and videotaping was obtained on the same day (see Appendix H). The students were asked to fill in two questionnaires: the first one was about their background knowledge of English and the second was concerned with their relationships with their peers that was later reflected in the sociogram for evaluating social distance between peers.

During the observation session (18 hours) the researcher videotaped the student's interactions to capture their verbal and non-verbal cues while expressing disagreement using an observation protocol (Appendix B), adapted from two taxonomies: Rees-Miller (2000) and Muntigl and Turnbull (1998), in addition to the seminal framework of Brown and Levinson (1987). Videotaping took place in the second week, specifically when students started to get used to the researcher's presence in class. Indeed, being a regular figure in class limited the students' intimidation. The researcher also made ample notes during the three weeks of observation; the total number of collected disagreements was 90, produced by 34

students. The number of disagreements on different topics and the teachers' language input and decisions was 35, while the students expressed 55 disagreements with their peers: 25 disagreements occurred during classroom discussions, and 30 turns of disagreement were produced during 60 minutes which was the duration of the formal debate.

3.8 Method of analysis

To answer the research questions, the researcher first transcribed all the video recordings that included instances of disagreement between the students and the professors as well as among peers. When disagreement tokens included Arabic, the Arabic words in the utterance have been transliterated into IPA from the Arabic and translated into English. Non-verbal cues were also coded by the researcher, who was also the first rater, which helped a great deal in deciding which disagreements were softened or aggravated in cases where the linguistic markers were absent. Second, the results were coded according to the observation protocol adapted from Rees-Miller (2000), and Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) taxonomies as well as the classical framework of Brown and Levinson (1987). Then a second rater, who is a current colleague in the MA program and has sufficient knowledge of pragmatics, double-checked the codes that the researcher made for inter-rater reliability. Accordingly, a few changes were applied by the researcher based on the discussion she had with the second rater. Third, the students' answers to peers' relationships questionnaire were illustrated in the form of a sociogram with the aid of a computer-assisted program (<http://groupdynamics.en.softonic.com/>). Finally, the researcher transcribed the recorded interviews and analysed them thematically according to the purpose of each research question.

Chapter Four: Results

4.1. Introduction

The present chapter presents the results of the current study that investigates the politeness strategies used by students in English-language classrooms when expressing disagreement. The data was collected during normal classrooms' interaction with the aid of the following instruments: videotaping, peer-relationship questionnaires, and interviews that were conducted with the participating students in order to justify their pragmatic choices. The main data, consisting of 90 instances of disagreement collected from undergraduate's natural interactions in English classrooms, is used to answer the research questions. The first two research questions are mainly concerned with the students' politeness strategies they use when expressing disagreements with their teachers and whether there are topic or context-specific differences in the way they disagree with their instructors. As for the last two research questions, they are intended to explore how students disagree with their peers and what politeness strategies they employ as well as the effect of the type of interactional activities and social distance on the students' disagreement with their peers.

Table 4.1, below, presents the total number of students who expressed disagreement verbally and nonverbally. The table indicates that 34 students, 16 males and 24 females, produced 90 turns of disagreement during classroom observations.

Table 4.1 Number of students who expressed verbal and nonverbal disagreement

Class	Number	Males	Females
Business English 1	21	8	13
Business English 2	13	8	5
Total	34	16	24

4.2 Student-Teacher disagreements

The primary focus of the first research question is to examine how Egyptian undergraduates express disagreement from a politeness theory perspective with their instructors. Table 4.2, below, provides an overview of the number of turns and percentages of the different types of disagreements which the students expressed towards both their instructors and peers. The table can also be used as a reference for question three which explores the politeness strategies that the students used to disagree with their peers.

Table 4.2. Distribution of types of disagreements in the two classrooms video taped

Category	Student-teacher	Student-student
Softened: positive politeness	7 (20%)	2 (10%)
Softened: negative politeness	6 (17%)	11 (44%)
Softened contradiction	5 (14%)	2 (10%)
Neither softened nor strengthened	7 (20%)	9 (36%)
Aggravated disagreements	10 (28%)	1 (10%)
Total	35 (100%)	25 (100%)

Table 4.2, above, shows that the students used 51% of softened disagreement when addressing their instructors (combining the first three categories of softened disagreements), while they used 28% of aggravated disagreements. The aggravated disagreements consisted of either challenging comments or a sarcastic facial expression or intonation. The students also used 20% of neither softened not strengthened disagreements with their teachers.

Table 4.2 also shows the numbers and percentages of disagreement strategies that the students produced with their peers. Negative politeness strategies were preferred by the students as they constituted 44% of the total turns of disagreements. Aggravated disagreements were almost nonexistent among peers as they made up 10% only of the total number of turns.

This section discusses the strategies that the students adopted in order to express disagreement with their teacher. These strategies include (a) softened disagreement, under which come positive and negative politeness strategies as well as softened contradictions, (b) neither softened nor strengthened contradictions, and (c) aggravated disagreement in which students challenged the teachers' stances either through their facial expressions or intonation.

4.2.1. Softened disagreement. Positive politeness strategies. The students made use of various positive politeness strategies to mitigate their disagreements when addressing their instructors. These include humour and the use of in-group language, as well as token agreements.

Humour. Jokes are one of the positive politeness strategies suggested by Brown and Levinson (1987) "for putting H at ease" (p. 124) and minimizing the effect that an FTA might have on the H. In this study, humorous disagreements were mainly conveyed through the medium of L1 and slang. Brown & Levinson (1987) viewed the use of in-group language and slang as ways to redress an FTA, as they emphasize shared attitudes between the S and the H. The following excerpt is an example of disagreement between a student and a teacher that includes humour as a softener:

Ex 1:

T: I think the best method will be looking for a scholarship,
you don't have to pay but needs to fulfil certain requirements=

→ S: ((humourously))
= walāhī ?na momken ?taba? flūs men suḥābī =
'I myself can borrow money from my friends'

T: = So borrowing.

In the above example, the teacher is discussing scholarships as being the best method for financing education, a viewpoint that was humorously rejected by the student. Through the use of humour, the student showed an oppositional stance to that of the teacher. The student indicated that a scholarship is not the best method to finance one's education, that borrowing money, specifically from friends can be the best way for this student to provide for her own education. Here, it is noteworthy that the student's utterance included two different politeness strategies: the use of L1 jargon and slang "ʔabaʔ" (to borrow).

The use of humour by a student when disagreeing with a teacher was quite evident in another example, in which the student jokingly expressed her inability to understand a meaning of a word explained by the teacher:

Ex 2:

T: So, what does dramatically mean is it extremely or significantly? =

Ss: = Significantly=

S1: = Extremely ʔabʕan=

'Of course, it's extremely'

T: = So we have two different points of views: extremely and significantly=

Ss: = /ʔ /

T: So could you give an example? Your colleague said "dramatic change" so this change is on all levels or a lot of levels? =

Ss: = a lot of levels=

T: =So it's not everything, its 90%, so dramatically is significantly =

→ S1: ((Smilingly and humorously)) (Spoken with determination)

= ʔana meʃ muktaneʕa.

'I am not convinced'

→ T: why?! Let's see the other words, maybe you will get convinced.

In the previous instance, the teacher was explaining the differences between adjectives like "dramatic", and "significant" by providing examples. In the sequence of her explanation, the teacher elicited from the students what dramatic change implied, and she then verified their answers. The student in this example disapproved her peers' answers and the teacher's verification altogether. The fact that the teacher responded to the student's comment that she was not convinced by proposing to have the student look at additional examples is clear evidence that the teacher interpreted the student's stance as being in disagreement with the teacher's proposed explanation. Since disagreeing with the teacher's explanation would pose a threat to her professional identity, the student's use of humour plus L1 softened the force of the FTA.

However, it is important to mention here that in many cases when L1 was used with other types of disagreements other than humour, it aggravated disagreements rather than mitigated them, which will be shown later in the data analysis (see examples 12, 13, and 15 below).

Token agreements. Brown and Levinson (1987) indicated that token agreements are positive politeness strategies that are used to hide disagreements through the use of a linguistic marker such as "yes, but....."

The following excerpt is an example of how a student expressed disagreement through the use of a token agreement while having a discussion about cover letters with his teacher:

Ex 3:

T: People like to use this kind of language sophisticated language
to leave good impression, this is not right by the way =

→ S: = Yes, but you're like speaking with someone...what do you say?

... Professional person so he will understand these things

rather than

T: I agree but what he really means
by sophisticated language is really
technical hard language

In this example the teacher was discussing what the student should and should not do when writing a cover letter. The student objected to the teacher's opinion that "sophisticated language" should be avoided when writing cover letters by making it clear that employers are professional enough to understand and appreciate this kind of language. It should be noted here that the teacher was not clear about what she exactly meant by sophisticated language and consequently, she was subjected to the student's disagreement who had a positive perception of the word "sophisticated". In the post-observation interview, the student who produced this utterance justified the use of "yes, but " at the beginning of his disagreement by saying:

Because I have a point to sort out, I know something is right when I'm saying it. Maybe he is saying something additional to me. It adds some info to me, *Howwa ʔāl hāga fa ʔana bazawed ʕleiha* [I am adding to what the professor already said].

Interview 9

(Student 4)

So it is clear that the student used this linguistic marker "yes, but" to hide his disagreement and imply that he wanted to give different perspective. Hence he appealed to the teacher's positive face, especially in that she placed emphasis on "sophisticated language" so as to warn the students against using it. Therefore, direct disagreements in this case would have threatened her positive face. The teacher's

agreement to the student's disagreement and clarifying what she exactly meant by "sophisticated language" minimized the face threat.

Another mitigating device that was employed in this example was the use of justification "you're like speaking with someone...what you say? ... professional person so he will understand these things". Locher (2004) discusses providing emotional reasons as a further way of saving the addressee's face. However, providing personal and emotional reasons for disagreement is not expected in an educational context, and thereby the researcher used justification in the same role as emotional reasons.

4.2.2 Negative politeness strategies. The following section explores the negative politeness strategies that the students employed to soften disagreement. These strategies include expressing disagreement through hedges, and counterclaims.

Hedges. Hedging, as emphasized by Brown and Levinson (1987) is a device used by the S to avoid being fully committed to off-record his/her own belief, thus reducing the effect of the imposition of a speech act. That is, hedging can be used by the S to weaken his/her evaluation or assumption, thereby avoiding imposition on the H's negative face. This point is illustrated by the following example, which includes the hedging device "I think":

Ex 4:

S: actually I think it's a dis.disadvantage not to have
social media because everybody is using it so eh:

Here, the teacher was discussing with her students the claim that social media has made life harder. The interesting thing about this particular example is that it was part of a speaking activity that the teacher implemented as a post listening exercise but that

had not been originally planned by the teacher. In fact, the teacher had short discussion with the researcher about the negative impact that social media might have on one's life, which was why she did not have a Facebook account. The teacher thought of broadening the discussion to include her students in order to know what teenagers think about social media, as she felt that it would be a good speaking activity for her class. The important point here is that disagreement in the student's utterance might be regarded as both a face-enhancing and face-threatening act. That is, at the onset of the discussion, when the student thought that the activity was only a speaking activity, the teacher's face was more enhanced by having disagreements and different points of view as disagreements resulted in more elaborated discussions and arguments than simple agreements did, and thereby this helped the teacher point out issues related to the students' speaking and argumentative skills. The teacher preference for disagreement when discussing a topic was confirmed by one of the interviewees:

When the teacher initiates a classroom discussion about a certain topic, this means that he/she is willing to debate, so I will be more open about my own stance, however, I will try to select the words that I think will be appropriate when addressing my teacher.

Interview 5 (Student 9) [tr.by the author]

Throughout the discussion, however, the teacher's own beliefs were quite evident to the students, and perhaps that is why the student chose to hedge her opinion and weaken her judgment by using the phrase "I think", especially since she was commenting on her teacher not having a Facebook account. The student's stammer while saying "dis.disadvantage" also served the same aim. Locher (2004) posited that hesitations can have the same effect as hedges on both the S and H face, depending on where they occur within the utterance. So by being hesitant in saying

"dis.disadvantage" which is again a negative judgment on the teacher not having a Facebook account, the student's disagreement produced a softened effect.

Questions. The following excerpt is an example of a student who expressed disagreement through a question form in the discussion of the use of some vocabulary items:

Ex 5:

T: ((giving feedback to a student's answer))

Yes, goes down excellent, so if the system goes down it takes days to fix it =

→ S: = Why not crashes? =

→ T: = Yeah, why not?

This interaction has been classified as disagreement in the sense that the student's query as to why "crashes" cannot be used instead of the term "goes down", which was proposed by the teacher, constituted a face threat to the teacher's authority as the English expert.

Of course, an alternative interpretation could be given, which argues that the student, as a nonnative English speaker, was simply negotiating meaning with his teacher and trying to establish the semantic difference between "goes down" and "crashes".

For the purpose of this study, Ex(5) is classified as a softened disagreement, following the taxonomy of Rees-Miller (1995), who considered negative questions which query an expert and provide alternative suggestions as a type of softened disagreement.

Counterclaims. Counterclaims are defined by Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) as disagreeing by providing alternative claims without directly contradicting or challenging the addressee. By looking at the data at hand this research can also add that counter claims might limit the scope of a previous claim as shown in the example below:

Ex 6:

T: = Everywhere you go you find people asking for recruiters=

→ S: = Only graduates get part time jobs=

In this example, the teacher was discussing how students can finance their education. One student suggested that working is a good method to provide for one's education. The teacher claimed that both graduates and undergraduates have the privilege of getting part time jobs; however, the student disagreed by confining her claim to only graduates. This might be considered a negative politeness strategy that softens disagreement, since it only partially disagreed with the teacher's statement.

4.2.3 Contradictions softened through mitigating devices like

justifications. Contradictions, especially those starting with "no," or "I disagree," that were softened at the end of an utterance through the use of justifications were not uncommon in the current study. Kavaka (2012) indicated that disagreements followed by justifications are expected in the classroom context since the students cannot just say "I disagree" or "you are wrong" without providing any explanation or justification.

In the following example the teacher was discussing with her students the reasons why she thinks social media makes life harder than before.

Ex 7:

T: I am claiming, I have the right to claim whatever, I am saying that social media and so on are making our lives or social media is making our life harder today, it's really making our life more stressful today, this is what I am claiming let's see what do you think? but support your point, let me start with the nice beautiful lady, tell me what you think and what S1 and S2 think =

S1: = I disagree, it's easier, and I get to know new people with different cultures and different beliefs, and you see video chat with relatives studying abroad.

In example (7), the role of justification as a mitigating device for disagreement is highlighted through the teacher's demand that the students support their agreement or disagreement by providing justification for their claims. The student's use of only "I disagree" without any support would have threatened the teacher's positive face who was very interested in having an on-going argument with her students and having an idea of what they think of social media.

In example (8), below, the student only said "I disagree", followed by a pause. However, the teacher softened the threat that might have resulted from such disagreements through the use of repetition, which in some cases emphasize solidarity (Locher, 2004), and also by seeking explanation and justification. In the following example, the teacher was suggesting a sentence that might summarize the main idea of a reading text. The direct disagreement "I disagree." in such a context adds to the seriousness of an FTA. Thus, to protect her own face, the teacher asked the student to provide justification for his proposition.

Ex 8:

T: Let me give you my sentence if you are interested,
I said because expectations increase, work load expands
((The teacher repeats the sentence))=

T: ((she is moving to the last paragraph))
The last paragraph

→ S: I disagree with you=

T: = You disagree with my sentence, why? =

S: = Because he didn't say there is a work load on people=

T: = Let's read it again, you don't believe that he is mentioning
here work load, actually he mentions work load.

Non-verbal justification can also be considered a mitigating device toward
contradictions, as will be shown in example (9):

Ex 9:

T: Sabbatical means unpaid vacation=

→ S: ((trying to show the teacher the definition on the mobile phone dictionary))
= But.../? / paid

On the one hand, the fact that the student is supporting his refutation of the teacher's definition of the term "sabbatical" by calling up the mobile phone-based dictionary definition which states that sabbaticals are "paid", not "unpaid" as the teacher has asserted, is a clear case of a contradictory statement that is neither softened nor strengthened. On the other hand, this disagreement could be interpreted as a softened disagreement since the effect of the contradictory "but" was minimized by the non-verbal justification. In any case, the student is clearly disagreeing with the teacher.

4.2.4 Non – verbal softeners. In the context of the classroom, the students employed different nonverbal signs to disagree with the teacher. The following

excerpt is an example of how facial expressions in some situations mitigated a potential FTA.

Ex 10:

T: Exercise number two you have two extracts from a CV
this will help you later on in order to write your own CV
we' r gonna do that, this will be three weeks from now,
you will write different formats of CV=

→ S: = (frowning) =

T: ((Teacher smiles))
= This is ve: ry easy

In example (10), the teacher was pointing out that later in the semester the students would learn how to write their own CVs. Being a freshman, the student responded to the teacher's intended plan by frowning, which implied that it would not be easy for him to write his own CV at that stage. In this example, the student's disagreement expressed non verbally limited the adversity that might have resulted from a verbal disagreement to the teacher's plan, who was supposed to be more experienced and thus know what works best for the students. Prolonging the vowel in the word "very" in the teacher's response and smiling were indicators of her acknowledgement of the student's nonverbal disagreement.

4.2.5 Neither softened nor strengthened disagreements. Contradictions usually offer a negative proposition to a previous utterance. They are always marked by either the negative particle "no" or the positive particle "yes" (Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998; Rees-Miller, 2000). Because contradictions are in many instances, not preceded by any softeners, they are categorized by Rees-Miller (2000) as neither softened nor strengthened disagreements.

The following excerpt is an example of contradictions used in the classroom setting between the students and their teachers:

Ex 11:

S: What about getting a job? =

T: = It's not common here in Egypt=

→ S: = No, sometimes

In example (11), the teacher was discussing the methods that students can resort to in order to finance their studies. The student negated the teacher's claim that it is not common in Egypt for students to work to provide for their university studies by saying only "no" without further explanation and without giving a chance for the addressee to continue the discussion.

4.2.6 Aggravated disagreements. Students engaged in aggravated disagreements with their power superiors, namely their teachers, by using two aggravation strategies: challenging questions, and L1 as well as L2 discourse makers. Verbal shadowing and contradictions were also aggravated by the S's voice intonation. Even though Rees-Miller (2000) categorized verbal shadowing as neither softened nor strengthened disagreement, the present research classifies it as an aggravated one. One reason for the new classification was that Rees-Miller (2000) ignored gestures and voice intonation of the speaker when performing verbal shadowing that includes no softeners, and thus she considered verbal shadowing as neither a softened nor an aggravated form of disagreement.

Challenging questions. By asking challenging questions, Muntigl and Turnbull (1998) implied that the speaker challenges the H through questions that require the H to back up his/her claims with sufficient evidence. Such questions also imply that the hearer might not be able to support his/her proposition.

The following excerpt provides an example for how challenging questions can threaten the teacher's professional identity, especially if the question targeted her language input. In the following example the teacher is having an argument with her student on a sentence that the teacher claimed to be a fact and is always true:

Ex 12:

Answering an if-conditional question

- T: Every single time he forgets his umbrella, it rains, so it happens all the time, since it's something that is fixed
- S: < L2 L2> But it's not a fact, ?zay fact?!
- T: =Something that is always always true. =
- S: ((Sarcastic tone))
=if he forgot his umbrella in summer, it will rain?!=
- T: = if he is unlucky person, it will rain
- S: ((looks disappointedly to his friend and not convinced))

In example (12), the teacher gave an example for the zero conditional which is used to talk about things that are always true and scientific facts. The student objected to the teacher's use of the example "if he forgets his umbrella, it rains" as it was not a fact, and thereby it was not the best example to show how the zero conditional functions. As a result, he challenged the teacher to support her claim that the example was a fact. The sarcastic tone through which he conveyed his question implied that the teacher would not be able to provide any evidence for her claim. It is also noteworthy that the use of L1 and code-switching in the challenging question "?zay fact" (how come it's a fact?) was used to increase the intensity of the disagreement. On the other hand, in order to lessen or hide the severe effect of disagreement and also to soften the threat to which she was exposed, the teacher resorted to humour, by

saying "if he is unlucky person, it will rain". In his interview, the student himself reported:

Grammar wise, the sentence is definitely correct, but it's illogical. So, if she, the teacher, wanted to give an example for the zero conditional, she should have given one that makes sense. Yeah, I looked at my friend because he told me that the example can be logical if it is considered a personal fact, and I was not even convinced with my classmate's justification. Anyways, if I find this example on my exam, I will use the zero conditional as the teacher explained, however, I will not be convinced.

Interview 7 (Student 3) [tr.by the author]

Although the student challenged the teacher to provide a logical justification for the example she gave, the last statement he made in the interview shows that he acknowledges the power difference between himself and the teacher. The student's last statement fully complies with Dahl's (1957) definition for power "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something B would not otherwise do" (as cited in Locher, 2004, p. 15).

Another interesting example of challenging questions was expressed by one of the students when discussing the use of some vocabulary items.

Ex 13:

- S: ʔāxer waḥde leih meʃ upload? el mafrūd upload=
 'The last one why not *upload?*!, it is supposed to be upload'
- Ss: = ʔhda yā ʃam meʃ keda=
 'Calm down'
- T: ((laughing))
 =its ok, its ok

This final challenging question by the student constituted an aggravated disagreement. Since the student was imposing his own point of view on the teacher through the use of the L1 word "el mafrūd" which means "it is supposed to be ", in

this example the student question plus his use of L1 implied that he needed a strong justification for the teacher's suggested answer in order to be convinced especially that while doing the same exercise the teacher had previously acknowledged that some of the students' suggestions were correct. The other students' response to the student disagreement by saying "calm down" is a clear evidence of what Cromdal (2004) has mentioned about code switching and its role in making social opposition more serious. Although excerpt (13) is not an example of social opposition, yet it is quite obvious that the use of L1 was about to escalate the opposition which was brought to an end by the teacher's reply "its ok it's ok". The fact that L1 and code switching strengthened disagreement was confirmed in one of the interviews when one student said that L1 is "more aggressive, because more people are more used to persuade in Arabic".

Aggravating L1 and L2 discourse markers. In the context of the current study, discourse markers like "of course" served to produce aggravated disagreements. Simon-Vandenberghe and Aijmer (2005) defined "of course" as a multifunctional discourse marker used by political speakers to propose a claim that is non-negotiable. In the situation below, "of course" performed the same function of introducing the students' assumption with no room for further negotiation with the teacher.

Ex 14:

- T: this is writing you are not supposed to be cheating=
 → S: ((smiling and surprised at the same time))
 = of course, I am not cheating
 T: ((The teacher did not comment and continued grading
 the other papers she had))

S: ((whispering to her friend))

?zay ?Vej?

'How come I cheat?'

In the above example, the students were having an in-class writing exam.

Here, the student expressing disagreement was talking to one of her classmates when she was interrupted by the teacher's claim that in writing exams she was not supposed to cheat. The student opposed the teacher's assumption that she is a cheater by using "of course" and giving a surprised facial expression in order to show that the teacher should not have even attempted to make such a claim. The student's whispered comment to her friend as to how one can cheat on a writing exam leads to the reasonable interpretation that the student's comment was not only rejecting the teacher's assumption that she was a cheater, but constituted an intensified rejection of the teacher's admonishment since it was unimaginable to her as to how one could even attempt to cheat on a writing exam. Taken together with the student's degree of surprise and strong rejection of the teacher's assumption that she was cheating on a writing exam, this incident is considered to be a case of aggravated disagreement. The student's disagreement threatened the teacher's negative face, by showing rejection of her entire assumption. This interpretation is justified by the fact that the teacher did not pursue her claim of cheating and simply continued grading. By avoiding commenting on the student's disagreement, the teacher decided to end the argument to minimize her face loss.

On the other hand, there are L1 discourse markers that played a role in strengthening disagreements, as shown in the example below:

Ex 15:

T: x, you still have a problem? =

→ S: ((in a disappointed tone))

= < L2 L2>maʃandīʃ ʔslan problem

'I didn't have a problem in the first place'

T: ((Did not comment on the student's disagreement and continued discussing other students' problems))

In the previous example, the teacher was having a discussion with her freshman students about the problems that they might be having in their first semester. By using the L1 discourse marker "ʔslan", meaning in the first place, the student totally rejected the teacher's claim and denied the entire assumption that she had a problem. Disagreement was further aggravated by the student's angry tone. The fact that the teacher did not comment on the student's rejection of her assumption that she had a problem implies that this strengthened the disagreement and the use of the L1 discourse marker "ʔslan" (in the first place) constrained the teacher's opportunity to continue her discussion with the student. Cromdal (2004) states that "code-switching may be used by opponents to constrain her or his opportunities to participate in further adversative interaction" (p. 53).

Aggravated verbal shadowing. Although Rees-Miller (2000) categorized verbal shadowing as neither a softened nor a strengthened disagreement, some instances of verbal shadowing in the data of this study reflected aggravated disagreement through voice intonation and facial expressions. The example below illustrates a discussion between the teacher and a student about the meaning of *to drive in* that the student came across in a reading text.

Ex 16:

- T: so, to drive-in is to hammer =
- S: =\ / to hammer! =
- T: = if I say I need to drive in a nail in the wood,
So this mean you are going to hammer it in=
- S: =Driving in should be something more smooth.

The above example shows verbal shadowing in which voice intonation strengthened the force of an FTA and threatened the teacher's face. According to Kotthoff (1993) when such verbal shadowing takes place in an argument, it intensifies the speech act. Furthermore, Kotthoff (1993) claims that a repetition "sharpens the dissent because it takes over the general evaluation of the previous utterance but denies its applicability" (p. 202). The student's disagreement may at first seem to be a simple astonishment, however by considering the following turns and that the student believed that the phrasal verb "to drive in" implied smoothness, it can be noted that the student shadowed the teacher's word to show her disapproval of the teacher's suggested meaning for the phrasal verb "to drive in". The student's fall-rise intonation and surprised facial expression also suggested her uncertainty of what the teacher said. This kind of disagreement is labelled by Rees-Miller as "astonished disagreement" (p. 133).

The previous section presented examples of different types of disagreements which the students expressed toward their teachers. The following section will present the students' perceptions of what kind of disagreements they prefer to use when addressing their teachers and what disagreements they avoid when arguing with the power superior.

4.2.7 Interview results: Students' comments on disagreements with

instructors. Table 4.3, below, offers demographic data of the 10 student interviewees.

The students who were chosen based on gender balance were all 18 years old.

Another criterion for their participation was the degree to which they expressed disagreements in class with both their instructors and peers. This degree was decided upon the researcher's observation.

Table 2.3. Description of the student interviewees from Business school

Student	Gender	Age	Degree of disagreement expressed
Student 1	Male	18	Moderate
Student 2	Male	18	High
Student 3	Male	18	High
Student 4	Male	18	High
Student 5	Male	18	Reluctant
Student 6	Female	18	Moderate
Student 7	Female	18	Moderate
Student 8	Female	18	Moderate
Student 9	Female	18	Very reluctant
Student 10	Female	18	Moderate

Students' preferences and avoidance of disagreement strategies with the power superior are discussed below.

A number of students in the interview pointed out the strategies that they would prefer to use to soften disagreements with their instructors. Student 6 said that when she is disagreeing with her teacher, she would like to say, "I think we could consider another point of view," as this is more polite than just simply saying "no"(Interview 6). She also stated that the phrase "I disagree" was also a polite way of disagreeing with her instructor rather than simply using flat "no" which she can only use when expressing disagreement with her peers. Student 8 reported that if she disagrees with her professor, she might say, "Professor, there is something against my point of view we need to discuss it if you can" (Interview 3). She felt she could

not just tell the person, "No, I don't understand your point and I disagree with your point, this is not making sense to me." For her, this would be "very aggressive" and thus she must "take it slow." The importance of justification as a softener is emphasized by student 4, who said in his interview: "You have to discuss with people and you have to clear your points out" (Interview 8). Although the student did not explicitly mention the need for justification when expressing disagreement, however its importance was implied through the use of the verb "discuss" that entails giving enough details and support for one's claims.

They also discussed the disagreement strategies they avoid when addressing their teachers. Student 10 also felt that saying, "No, I don't agree with you," is a strengthened disagreement:

It depends on the way the person says his/her opinion; so, for example if this person disagrees with the teacher by saying, "no, I don't agree with what you said, I did ok, so how are you saying that?! You don't appreciate my work." I believe that in such a case he/she will sound rude.

Interview 10

Some students justified their use of some disagreement strategies with their teacher that they produced during classroom observations. Student 4, who used the phrase "I disagree with you" in a classroom discussion with his teacher, justified his choice by saying:

I only wanted to express my opinion; it just means that I disagree with you. It happens sometimes. I say this all of a sudden without having any control over the way it is said. However, as long as it is polite, I think it's ok.

Interview 9

Student 3 justified his use of aggravated disagreement with his instructor by saying:

When disagreeing, I only think about the point I need to make, and then I think about the way I disagreed after I see how disappointed the addressee was. Only then do I get to know that I was aggressive.

Interview 7 [tr.by the author]

4.3. Topic / context-specific disagreement differences in student- teacher disagreements

Research question two investigates whether there are topic or context-specific differences in the way these students express disagreement with their instructors.

Students interact with their teachers through various classroom activities and moments, meaning that they can have an entire classroom discussion about certain topics, in which they might express disagreements toward the teacher's beliefs, or that they can disagree in situations related to the teacher's explanation, language input, or classroom decisions.

Table 4.4, below, summarizes the politeness strategies and disagreement strategies that the students employed with the instructor with regards to topic and context –specific issues. Disagreement turns (32) that were directed toward the teacher were sub-categorized into disagreements about topics (such as the impact of social media, the best methods for financing education and why students joined the Business department) and disagreements which were context-specific. Context-specific disagreements mainly included arguments about the teacher's language input and classroom decisions.

Table 4.4. **Distribution of disagreements according to their purposes**

Types of disagreement	Topic	Context-specific
Softened: positive politeness	3 (25%)	4 (22%)
Softened: negative politeness	4 (33%)	3 (18%)
Softened contradictions	3 (25%)	2 (10%)
Neither softened nor strengthened	2 (16%)	4 (14%)
Aggravated disagreements	0	10 (37%)
Total	12 (100%)	27 (100%)

According to Table 4.4, the students used more politeness strategies to soften the disagreement when discussing a certain topic, such as the impact of social media, with the teacher. Furthermore, softening contradictions with justifications and counter claims were likely in the classroom context, especially when discussing an issue with a professor. It is noteworthy that the students did not use any aggravated disagreements with their teachers in classrooms discussions.

On the other hand, the students employed softened disagreements with a total of 9 turns (50%) of the total number of disagreement turns directed toward the teachers about any context-specific issues; in the case of the two classrooms that were observed, context-specific disagreements were mainly related to the teacher's language input. Nevertheless, aggravated disagreements were not unlikely in situations when the teacher gave examples or suggested answers for classroom exercises.

4.3.1 Interview results: disagreements about topic and context-specific issues. Three students reported that they did not have any problems disagreeing with their teacher, either about a discussion point or aspects related to the context or the teacher's language input. However, these three students mentioned that they would be more careful and indirect when it came to disagreements about context-specific issues. During his interview, student 1 said:

If I am disagreeing with someone with a higher degree and he considers him/herself to be a specialist in his field, I will try to deliver my point of view in a soft manner and at the end of the day his decision will be the best.

Interview 8 [tr.by the author]

Student 9 added to student 1's previous comment, that being in favour of a certain teacher had an impact on the way she disagreed with her especially with context-specific aspects:

If I have a problem with the teacher's explanation or I think that there might be something wrong in what she is saying, I will try not to be so "obvious in pointing the wrong thing" I will do it indirectly. As for disagreeing about a topic, the teacher is already willing to debate, so I will be more comfortable with disagreement, but also I will try to select the appropriate words to address my teacher. All in all, it depends on the teacher, if I like her I will try not to point anything wrong in class and will avoid disagreement with her.

Interview 5 [tr.by the author]

Student 5 said that he would employ the same strategies when disagreeing with his teacher about either a topic or context-specific aspects. However, he made it clear that he was not in favour of challenging the teacher's suggestions, even if the challenges were made politely:

I think it's the same; however I saw someone who was challenging but not in aggressive way, *wāḥed kān mṣānā fī class fa el teacher talbet menōh* to work in pairs [this one was a classmate whom the teacher asked to work with a partner]. I think he didn't accept the idea and he wanted to work alone. However, he said it in a polite way, not in aggressive way, but he was the only unique person who did this .It was something bizarre. Maybe he thinks that he is better than his classmates. I think it shouldn't be that way. He should have said to the teacher "Ok" and told his classmates later on that he wanted to work alone.

Interview 4

Furthermore, student 7 said she could disagree about both aspects. She also reported that she did not have a problem to showing opposition to the teacher regarding context-specific issues owing to her confidence in her English abilities.

According to student 7, the very nature of some English skills like writing is in accordance with negotiation and conflicting ideas.

Of course. If it's a writing or something, and she graded me a grade I didn't deserve or I feel like I didn't deserve, I should ask her why she did that, obviously to not repeat the mistake again and yea I feel like should ask her to just show her that I actually think that I don't deserve this grade so it's like I have self-confidence enough to ask her that I don't deserve this grade.

Interview 1

Elaborating further, student 7 said:

I think in other subjects I wouldn't do that, if in math or something like that. I'm not confident enough, I don't know much about it, but if in English, if I have a background and not background, if I have like something to go back to like grammar I have knowledge of grammar, yeah I can actually tell her that "I don't agree with that" and should try to convince her of my point of view because I think in English there's no right and wrong, when it comes in (lessons) are really clear, I don't think there's right wrong in it, so yeah.

Interview 1

On the other hand, student 10 asserted that she would never try to disagree with her teacher, especially about context-specific issues. She said:

ʔk Īd lʔ [definitely not]. If, say, I wrote writing and the teacher gave me feedback, she's a doctor, she knows what she's doing. That's her job.

Interview 10

4.4 Student-student disagreements

The third research question generally investigates how students disagree with their peers and what politeness strategies they mostly employ.

4.4.1. Softened disagreements. Positive politeness strategies. The positive politeness strategies that students mainly used to soften their disagreement with their peers are humour and token agreements.

Humour. Humour was not unlikely to happen between peers who were almost power equals when expressing disagreement. The following example shows how

humour and the use of in-group language helped mitigate the threat of the speech act and claim a common ground between power equals.

Ex 17:

T: What does the word considerable mean? =

S: =yo?xaz bihi

'to be considered' =

T: =Can you give me examples?

S1 :=Concern is.....

T: =No not concern=

→ S2: = ((Addressing her classmate))

considerably Yeir concern

'Considerably is different from concern'

In the example above, the student provided the correct meaning of "considerable" in Arabic; however, when asked by the teacher to further explain the term in English by giving examples, the student used "concern" as a synonym for considerable. The teacher's rejection to the student's answer was a mere contradiction that did not include any softeners or justification. Thus, one could argue, that in order to lessen the threat and save the positive face of the student who was exposed, the other student provided further justification for her disagreement accompanied, by humour and the use of L1.

Token agreements. Token agreements were also among the positive politeness strategies that took place between peers in the classrooms that were observed.

Examples of token agreements between peers can be the following:

Ex 18:

Two students discussing the pros and cons of social media

S1: It may be used eh like in bad things like.. hacking=

→ S2: = Yes, but in the work place it's like you/? /, /because
technology is in our place not in your life.

In order not to completely reject S1's contribution to the discussion, S2 chose to mitigate the force of disagreement by partially agreeing with S1. In the previous example, it is noteworthy to point out that S2 was higher in power than S1 due to factors such as him being a better student as well as regular participation in classroom activities. In fact, this power differential was admitted by S1 in his interview: "I agree with X in most of his opinions, he is a great person" (Interview 4). Thus, S2's choice to justify his disagreement, perhaps, was to save his peer's face by giving him the chance to negotiate and provide "better reasons which the speaker had not yet denied" (Locher, 2004, p. 127) and also to establish solidarity, which if absent or destroyed by aggravated disagreement, would affect their mutual co-operation during group work.

4.4.2 Negative politeness strategies. Students used counterclaims and hedges to soften disagreement that occur among peers.

Counter claims. Counter claims were also used between peers in the classroom context of classrooms. One example of counter claims between peers was the following excerpt that emerged in the discussion of cover letters:

Ex 19:

T: Those who want to state their experience right away,
 don't you think that first I have to like other people said
 ice break things a bit, have something like an introduction=

S1: = It's a formal letter! =

→ S2: = They have your CV=

T: So yes this acts as an ice breaker, so yeah we don't start by writing
 a formal introduction, we don't mention our names.

In the example above, the S did not directly contradict the H's opinion.

Instead, the S chose to give an alternative claim instead of challenging the H by saying, why would you have a formal cover letter when you already submitted your CV?, which is quite formal and straightforward. By using a counter claim, the S provided the H more freedom to keep the discussion going, rather than just saying "no" which leaves no chance for further discussion and hinders the H's freedom to express and justify his/her own stance. This student was well-recognized among his classmates for his strong arguments, which also placed him at a higher status than his peers. Thus, a mitigated form of disagreement was essential, not only for protecting the H's face, but also to ensure that his peers would not avoid disagreeing with him, which would thereby destroy his positive face.

Hedging. There were many instances of hedges between power equals during classroom observations. Disagreement utterances that included hedging devices such as "I think", "I guess" and "I'm not sure" were found among the corpus.

An example of hedging between peers was the following:

Ex 20:

S (1): The ones who get over 99% get scholarships=

→ S (2): =I guess over 95%=

The students were discussing scholarships as one of the methods for financing studies when the discussion shifted to their own university requirements' for rewarding high achievers with scholarships. Since this was that the third class for the students in the semester, the student (S2) chose the hedging device "I guess" to limit imposition on her classmate and to imply that this was just what she knew about scholarships and that her idea was subject to change. Hence, her disagreement to her classmate was softened.

4.4.3 Neither softened nor strengthened disagreement. The following excerpt is an example of neither softened nor mitigated disagreements between classmates who were discussing the informal aspects that should not be included in any cover letter:

Ex 21:

T: X, what are you saying? =

S1: =No =

T: =Why no? =

S1: =It's not kind of formal way to...

T: X is saying no because it's not a formal way of writing,
Yes X? =

→ S2: =Yes, it's a formal way=

→ T : = So now we have two conflicting ideas, one is saying no its not formal and another one is saying yes it's a formal way of writing, what do you think?

In the above example the teacher was having a classroom discussion about the use of sir/madam at the beginning of a cover letter. The S directly contradicted the H, using the positive particle "yes" but without adding any softeners to his disagreement. The context in which the utterance was made as well as the neutral intonation of the S

implied that the S had an established belief that he wanted to state, and so the face need of the H was not important for him to consider in this case.

Usually an FTA is done using a bald-on-record strategy when the S and H agree that their face needs can be ignored in favour of "efficiency" (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 69). This was the case in the following example, which included a contradiction. The fact that the teacher responded to the students' comments by stating that they are "conflicting" is clear evidence that she interpreted students' comments as being disagreement with each other.

Ex 22:

T: What does the word dramatically mean? =

S1: Dramatically is extremely=

→ S2: = No, it's significantly.

In the above example, the contradiction was neither softened nor strengthened, as clarifying the meaning of the vocabulary item took precedence over the H's face needs.

The previous section presented examples of different types of disagreements which the students directed toward their peers. The following section will present the students' perceptions of what kind of disagreements they would avoid when arguing with the power superior.

4.4.4 Interview results: Students' disagreements with peers. The interview results showed the disagreement strategies students would avoid when addressing their peers. The results of the interviews also give insights into the reasons behind the relative lack of disagreements among peers in the classrooms observed.

Concerning aggravated disagreement with peers, student 6 stated that not showing consideration strengthens disagreement. She provided an example from a group-work activity in one of the classes observed for this study:

When someone does not show consideration to your own point of view. It happened to me once in class, when a classmate of mine ignored my suggestion while answering a certain exercise.

Interview 6

Furthermore, the students' interviews offered some justifications for the relative lack of disagreement with their peers. Student 5 justified not disagreeing with his peers' claims by saying: "I will not comment because it's not my place to say my opinion"(Interview 4). Furthermore, student 10 commented on not showing disagreements to her peers' propositions in classroom by saying: "the teacher is the only one who has the right to do so. Maybe the teacher liked it. If I don't like it, if I don't have something good to say, I just don't say it" (Interview 10).

4.5 The effect of the type of interactional task and social distance on peers' disagreements

The fourth research question places focus on the effects of factors such as the type of interactional activity and social distance on the way students disagree with their peers.

4.5.1 Disagreements during formal debate. According to Bolander (2012), the topic and group purposes are factors that play a role in determining the ways that people realize disagreements. With reference to the present study, interactional activities such as debates did have an effect on the realization of disagreements among peers and the politeness strategies that they employed.

In one of the observed classrooms, the teacher divided the students into two groups and asked them to debate whether work places without technology 50 years

ago were better than modern work places. The teacher further asked the students to build strong arguments in order to defend their stances, and thus, the debate took the form of a competition between the two groups.

Table 4.5, below, shows the number of turns and percentages of different types of disagreements that the students used during their formal debate.

Table 4.5. Distribution of disagreement turns in the debate.

Types of disagreement	Number of turns	Percentages
Softened: positive politeness	5	16%
Softened: negative politeness	4	13%
Softened contradiction	3	10%
Neither softened nor strengthened	2	6%
Aggravated disagreements	16	53%
Total	30	100%

According to table 4.5, above, aggravated disagreements made up the majority of turns expressed during the debate (53%). The softened disagreements that students produced when debating constituted (36%) of the total number of turns. Most of the softened disagreements in the formal debate were used to protect the S's face rather than preserve the H's face needs, as will be shown in the examples below.

Softened disagreement. Positive and negative strategies. In the following example the students employed both a positive politeness strategy, specifically token agreement, and a counterclaim was used as a negative politeness strategy, in order to reply to the S (1) challenging question. In this excerpt S(1) challenged S(2) and S(3) who belonged to the female group to justify that working in an office crammed with employers with no traces of technology would create a better working atmosphere.

Ex 23:

S 1: Do you think sitting next to everyone sweating create
a better working atmosphere? =

→ S2: = It's a bit tiring, but maybe /? /

→ S 3: It's very depressing to sit alone on computers.

In the above example, the male student (S1) was challenging the female group with a question that implied that the girls would not be able to support their point of view. In order to protect her own face and become less prone to criticism S2 partially agreed with S1 challenging question. S3 also responded with a counterclaim without directly contradicting him. Her disagreement implied that she agreed in part with what he said; however, she was trying to open the door for more negotiation regarding the point in the discussion by providing an alternative claim. Also, direct disagreement in such a case would have made S3 more prone to criticism. In her interview, student 10, who is S3 in the excerpt above, said:

When I was debating with the male group, I was more convinced with their own point of view, but even if I was not 100% convinced with what I was saying, I did my best to show that I was correct.

Interview 10

Aggravated disagreements. Furthermore, the goal of winning the argument took precedence over protecting the addressees' face needs. This resulted in the realization of disagreement through aggravated strategies.

The following excerpt is an example of aggravated disagreement that was employed by one of the students to have power over the interlocutors. This interaction took place as a part of the formal debate.

Ex 24:

S1: ((talking about how computers create a better working environment))

Isn't it more organized than the past?!

→ S2 := That's another point =

S1: = No the working atmosphere =

In example (24) the students were discussing whether or not technology creates a better work atmosphere. By disagreeing through the use of an irrelevancy claim, the S2 implied that the S1 was not being relevant and was entirely off-topic. Irrelevancy claims have been categorized as the most aggravated kinds of disagreement that might hinder the H's ability to express him/her (Niroomand, 2012; Muntigl & Turnbull, 1998). Rees-Miller (1995) also mentioned that "[o]ne way in which an interlocutor can disagree with an opponent's proposition P is by attacking the support for P; this disagreement is intensified if the interlocutor says that the support has 'nothing to do with P' (p. 141). Given this, the researcher has interpreted the preceding utterance as an aggravated disagreement. The previous utterance took place near the end of the debate, when the S was trying to win the argument by threatening the H's face in order to end the discussion in her favour. The fact that the groups taking part in the debate were divided based on gender would be one of the factors behind the use of aggravated disagreement.

4.5.2 Social distance factor. The social distance variable was not pursued in great detail in this study, as all the students were freshmen and had not yet established any kind of relationship with their new peers, especially during the first three weeks when classroom observations occurred. In her interview, student 7 confirmed the previous point by saying:

Everyone in the English classroom is trying to make friends so we're really friendly with each other. Maybe afterwards in the third year or something like

that when people start having relationships and start having arguments outside class and like that can establish a relationship.

Interview 1

Furthermore, those who had close relationships with one another did not produce frequent disagreements. However, the researcher made use of the several instances of disagreement which did occur between peers to evaluate the role of social distance disagreements between peers. Examples of these included disagreement strategies such as hedging and aggravated disagreements, which were used between those who had close social distance.

Peer-relationships, in the two business English classrooms, are represented in two diagrams (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The diagrams mainly reflect the students' answers to the questionnaire which was used to establish the sociogram. In the current study, Figure 1 is used to illustrate peer relationships in Class 1, while Figure 2 is used for Class 2. The blue boxes in the diagrams are meant to represent male participants, while the pink circles represent females. Figure 1 and Figure 2 only show relationships that had been established for years and students who frequently interacted with each other in their classrooms since the only two relationships most of the students selected were "friends" and "classmate at school" options (refer to Appendix D) while they chose "I only know this person in class and I never speak much to this person" for the rest of the classmates with whom they are not friends.

Interpretation of Class 1 Sociogram. This diagram shows the connections between 21 students in the first class observed. Interpretation for the degree of relationships between peers is provided by the researcher below.

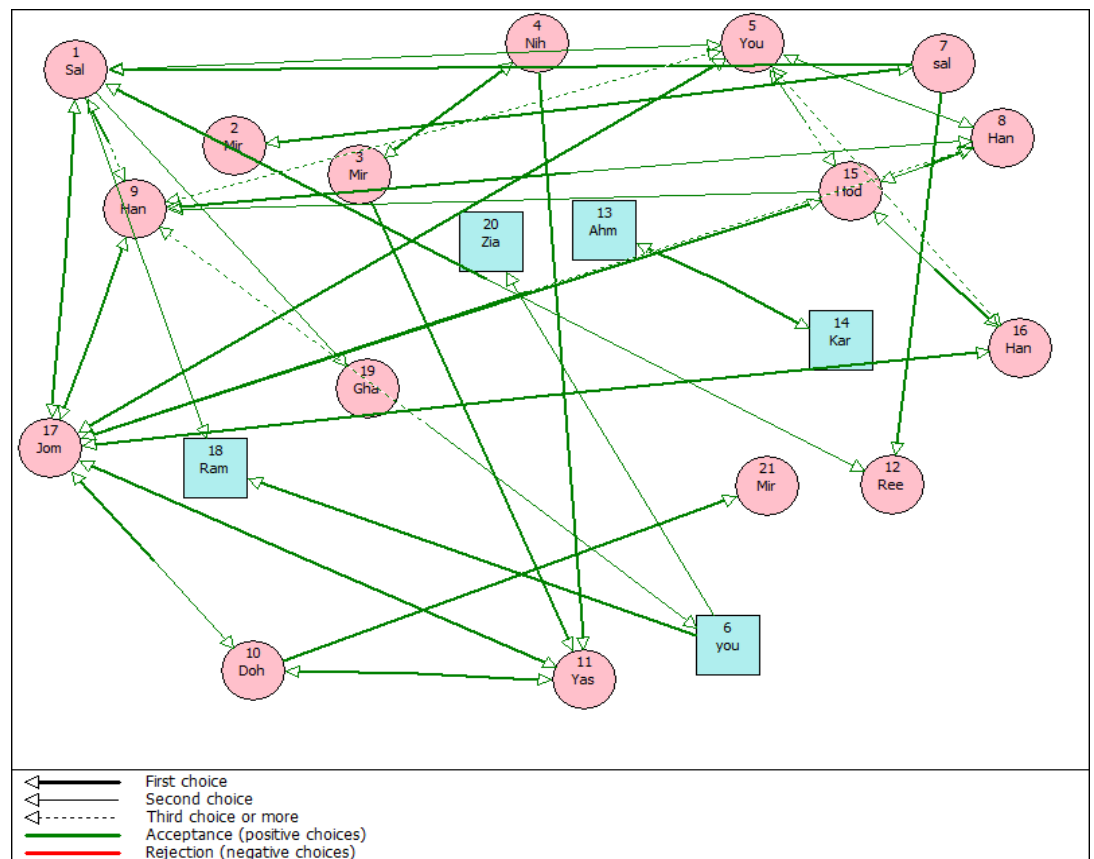


Figure 1. Sociogram (Class 1)

As the students identified their relationships through a series of questions with their classmates whose names were arranged alphabetically in a chart (Appendix D), the arrows are not truly representative of the students' first or second choices. Since there were no negative choices in the questionnaire, red arrows that represent rejection do not show on the chart. For these reasons, the researcher provides some explanation to Fig.1. So Fig.1 above is based on the students' answers to the questionnaires and classroom observation. The three types of arrows represent one choice in the first category "How well do you know this person?" of the questionnaire: "Someone I have known for several years, either as a classmate at school, or a friend". They also represent three choices in the second category "How often do you interact with this person?": "I frequently interact with this friend inside and outside classrooms", "a close friend of mine and we hang out together", and "this

person is a friend of mine and we "hang out" on campus together to eat, drink coffee, etc. /get together socially off campus". (Refer to Appendix D).

Two-sided arrows indicate that the students' relationships were mutual, such as the case with student (17) and student (5), whose friendship was mutual; however, the relationship between student (5) and student (1) was nonreciprocal, because student (1) selected student (5) as a friend but not vice versa. This is represented by the one-sided arrow, which in such cases means that student (5) either did not answer the questionnaire or did not select this student as a friend. This is also the case with student (6), who selected students (18) and (20) as friends, but was not chosen by them in return as they did not provide answers to the questionnaire. On the other hand, student (7) chose student (12) as someone with whom she interacted frequently, but student (12) explicitly reported that she did not interact with (7) at all; the same situation occurred between students (4) and (11).

All of the students in the chart who indicated that they had connections with each other reported that they had known each other for several years, either as school classmates or friends, except for students (13) and (14), who reported that they only knew each other from the class observed; however, in the same questionnaire they both ticked the item "This person is a friend of mine and we "hang out" on campus together to eat, drink coffee, etc./get together socially off campus" in their answer to the second category of "how often do you interact with your peers?".

It is important to mention that Fig.1 represents the relationships of 14 students out of 29, as some of them did not answer the questionnaire, while the others reported that they did not know other people in the class, and thereby they were excluded altogether from the sociogram. According to Fig.1 many students have no connection

to one another such as the case with students (8), (12), and (16). Also some students had very few connections, for example, student (10) has only three connections (11), (17), and (21).

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), a closer social distance between the S and the H will result in the production of more aggravated speech acts. On the other hand, a more removed social distance between the S and the H will result in more politeness strategies being applied to the speech act.

That was the case with the students (1) and (17) in Fig.1. The two students had a close social distance as they had known each other for several years; thus, aggravated disagreements among them were not uncommon. In the following example the two students were providing an answer to a question related to if conditionals.

Ex 25:

S17: ((answering an if-conditional question))

I wouldn't have done=

→ S1: = I wouldn't do:

Student (1) raised her voice while prolonging the vowel in the word "do" in order to show her disagreement with part of student (17)'s answer. Strengthening disagreement through voice intonation and serious facial expression posed a threat to the H's face; however, the power of the threat might be limited when the S and the H have a close social distance. In their interview, student 3 and student 7 also emphasized they feel comfortable when disagreeing with a close friend, "I feel more comfortable with disagreeing with close friends because they already know that I am not aggressive" student 3 said (Interview 7). Thus, expressing aggravated

disagreements toward close friends such as the case shown in example (25) might not be face threatening as much as they are if directed to a classmate.

Example 26 illustrates a case in which the effect of social distance is quite evident. Although the S and H in example (26), below, are not close friends, they usually sit next to each other in class and work together and they both reported that they hang out together.

Ex 26

- S14: I think using sophisticated language should be do
- S2: no
- S14: =Because it will give you a good impression=
- S13: = I am not sure =
- S14: =The cover letter is before the CV so this will leave a good impression=
- S13: = Let's see, leave it for the discussion.
-

In the above example, the S (S2) is illustrated as (13) and the H (S1) as (14).

The S (S2) reported in his interview that he was entirely convinced of his opinion. Therefore, one could argue that "I am not sure" was a hedging device rather than a means of showing hesitation. Social distance here played a role in softening disagreement and allowed the S to weaken his stance to save the negative face needs of his classmate, whom he is trying to establish a close relationship with. In his interview, student 5, who is represented in the chart as student (13), emphasized that because of the not so close social distance he prefers to leave the argument and the discussion to the teacher, he said:

I think because we didn't break the ice and because the whole thing is new. If someone says an opinion, I won't discuss it with him as long as the teacher is there. The teacher is bigger than me, so I can't disagree with my classmate directly in the presence of the teacher, I should show her some respect.

Interpretation of Class 2 sociogram. The following diagram visualizes the connections between 20 students in the second classroom. Interpretation for the degree of relationships is provided by the author below.

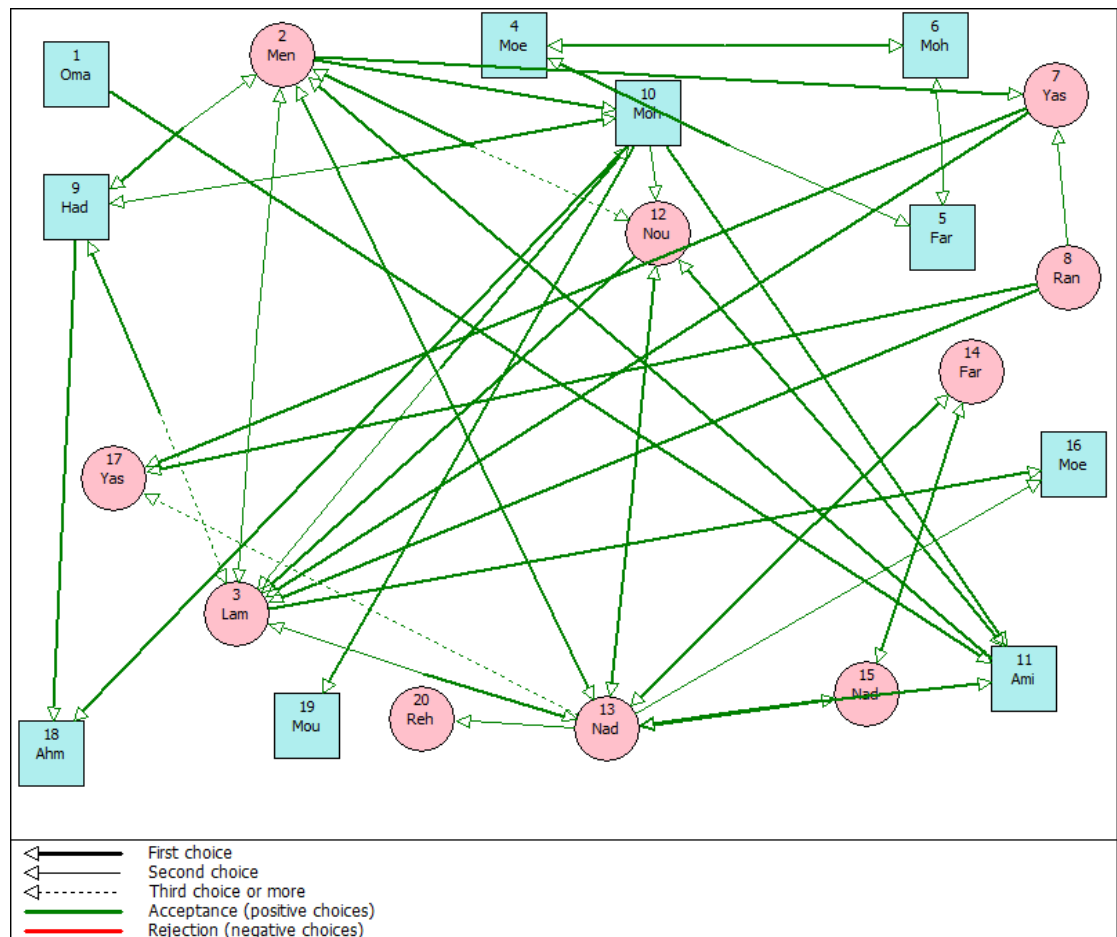


Figure 2. Sociogram (Class 2)

Much as with Sociogram 1, Fig.2 illustrates only three options: "someone I have known for several years", "someone I interact frequently with" and "a close friend of mine I hang out with". Examples of high school classmates who interact frequently inside and outside of the classroom can be found in students (3) and (16) based on the answers provided by student (3); however, the arrow is not bidirectional because student (16) did not answer the questionnaire. Examples of close friends who interacted frequently, but did not necessarily hang out together are students (2), (3), (7), (9), and (10); however, student (2) was not reported by student (10) to be a friend,

and student (7) did not offer answers to the questionnaire. Examples of close friends who hung out together are students (4), (5), and (6). It is also clear that students (3) and (10) were very popular, because many students selected them as "someone I have known for several years as a friend." Student (3) is selected as a friend by students (2), (10), (13), and (16), while student (10) was selected as a "friend for several years" by (2) and (3), and selected by student (3) as "someone he knows from this class", however, in his answer to the second category "how often do you interact with this person?" student (3) ticked "This person is a friend of mine and we hang out on campus together to eat, drink coffee, etc./get together socially off campus", and this relationship is the only exception in Fig.2.

It is also noteworthy that Fig 2 represents the relationships of 19 students out of 25 as the other six students ticked the item "I know this person from class only" and "I never speak to this person"; they even mentioned that they do not know many of the names on the list. According to Fig.2, there are also many students that have no connection to one another such as the relationship between student (12) and (4), and the relationship between (7), and (9). Student (14) has only two connection with students whom she had known for several years, students (13), and (15).

Some of the limitations of the two sociograms discussed above are that they do not reflect all of the students' answers to the questionnaires, as some of them were not interested in giving their answers. Another limitation is that the computer assisted program that was used to create the sociograms interpreted the order of names inserted for each question into three different types of arrows, despite the fact that the names were arranged alphabetically. However, the interpretation the researcher gave to the sociograms that visualized the students' connections did give an indication of

the relationships as well as the degree and type of interaction between members of the two classes observed.

Brown and Levinson (1987) indicated that a closer social distance result in aggravated disagreement was also the case with the students who participated in a debate in Class 2. As the debate started between students (10) and (13) who shared a common friend from high school, the students employed aggravated disagreements through the use of challenging questions and irrelevancy claims which affected the rest of the students in that they chose the same strategies throughout the debate. That is, even though the rest of the students, (14), (16), and (17), taking part in the debate did not have close connections to one another, they continued using aggravated disagreements without considering their face needs. Therefore, the close social distance between the two peers who started the debate plus the goal of winning the argument were two important factors in the students' preferences for aggravated disagreements.

Chapter Five: Discussion and conclusions

5.1 Introduction.

This chapter offers a detailed analysis and interpretation of the data that was presented in the results section to answer the four research questions which mainly examined how students disagree with their peers and teachers. The research questions also explored whether there are topic and context-specific differences in the way students disagree with their instructors. The last research question aimed at giving insights into the effect of social distance and the type of interactional tasks on the way students disagree with their peers. The chapter starts with a discussion of each research question followed by an implication section. Furthermore, the researcher dedicates a concluding section to summarize the aims and findings of the study. Finally, the limitations of the study and further research directions are included at the end of the chapter.

5.2 Summary of the results.

The results presented in the previous chapter offer some useful insights into how disagreements occurred in conversations among participants of different power relations. One of the interesting findings of this study is that some of the strategies the students employed were influenced by the context, and not solely power differences. Many of these examples are related to the use of justifications and explanation with the power superiors, namely the teachers, and the frequent use of contradictions that are neither softened nor strengthened with the teachers (20%) and peers (36%). Another significant finding was that all of the aggravated disagreements (37%) the students used with their teachers were about her language input, despite reporting that they recognize the power differential between themselves and their teachers. The study also found that the highest frequency of aggravated disagreements occurred in

the formal debate among classmates, while in classroom discussions they were very rare and only occurred between close social distances. The students' preferences to use negative politeness strategies with their peers during classroom discussions is mainly attributed to the distant social distance and their intimidation to oppose their peers in the presence of the teacher, the issue which most of them highlighted in their interviews.

5.3 Discussion of results.

5.3.1 Student–teacher disagreements. This section offers a discussion of the first two research questions on how students disagree with their teachers and the topic and context-specific differences in the way students disagree with the power superior.

The use of justifications with power superiors. The present study supports the findings of previous studies which examined nonnative disagreement strategies with power superiors. First, one of the most common mitigating devices that the students used was justifications in combination with token agreements and even non-mitigating devices like "no". Although explanations used by South Korean students were emphasized as aggravated moves due to the cultural norms in Bell's (1998) study, giving an explanation is said to be a mitigating device in a number of studies (e.g. Fernandez, 2013; Jameson, 2004; Kreutel, 2007; Lawson, 2009). The Egyptian undergraduates' use of explanation and justification might be due to these being the norm in a classroom setting as well as being mitigating devices, especially when used together with blatant devices such as "no" or "I disagree" when addressing power superiors. Therefore, one might argue that power is not the only factor that has an impact on students' use of mitigating and politeness strategies. The context of the classroom as well as the culture play an important role, as the students are normally obliged to provide reasons and offer justification when opposing their teachers.

Students' justifications softened the impact of an FTA by giving the professor a chance to continue the discussion as well as the freedom to argue about his proposition.

The use of contradictions. Non-mitigating devices, namely contradictions that started with "no," were also present in the data. This agrees in part with Kreutel's (2007) findings, which showed that NNSs tend to abundantly use "no" and the blunt opposite "I disagree". The result also support Bell's (1998) finding on South Korean students' use of simple disagreements with their instructors. However, this finding contradicts what Brown and Levinson (1987) mentioned regarding the use of bald-on-record FTA, namely that direct FTAs mostly occur when the S is higher in power than the H and not the opposite, as in the case between students and teachers. One interpretation for this is that students sometimes give greater weight to the point they need to clarify over the face demands of the addressee, even if he/she is the power superior. Furthermore, the student's occasional failure to mitigate an FTA can be explained by the lack of explicit pragmatic teaching for speech acts. Bell (1998) explained that "the speech act of disagreement is acquired later than the acts of giving advice and requesting" (p. 35) and thus, some students, even if they do not have low proficiency level, use bald-on- record strategies.

The use of aggravated disagreements. The current study presents some findings that were not found in other similar studies about disagreements. First, the students' production of aggravated disagreements at high frequencies with their teacher, especially when discussing her language input or classroom decisions, was not common in studies such as (e.g. Heidari, Eslami-Rasekh & Simin, 2014; Niroomand, 2012; Rees-Miller, 2000; Walkinshaw, 2007). This finding also contradicts studies that were concerned with Egyptians' refusal strategies with power

superiors (e.g. El Batal & El Bakary, 2002; Fernandez, 2013; Morkus, 2009). These studies reported that Egyptians barely express refusal to people of higher status and if they are used, they tend to mitigate the FTA and use indirect strategies (El Batal & El Bakary, 2002; Morkus, 2009). This also contradicts the findings from the interviews, in which some of the students emphasized that they would be very indirect if they had to disagree with the teacher about his/her language input. This suggests that the students, who acknowledged the power differential between themselves and their professor in their interviews, would like to draw attention to their high proficiency level by challenging their teacher. In such a case the students did not mean to cast doubt on their teacher's knowledge and threaten her professional identity as much as they wanted to instead boast about their advanced L2. This is in line with Sabee and Wilson's (2008) study, in which they emphasized that the students' desire to impress their teacher was one of the factors behind them negotiating their low grades with their instructors. In many other cases highly proficient and confident students used aggravated disagreement with the teacher in situations when they thought that the teachers' language input was not accurate. Since the students were all at B2 and C1 proficiency level, they can all use language effectively and accurately, and maybe this explains why students used aggravated disagreement when rejecting what they thought to be inaccuracies.

Although the effect of the students using L1 in an L2 setting with their instructors has not been adequately addressed, some studies placed focus on how code switching might escalate social opposition (Cromdal, 2004). In the present study, the students' use of L1 as in examples (12), (13), and (15) when disagreeing served to increase the aggravation to the FTA. One explanation for this is that the more challenging the students wanted their disagreements to be, the more they used L1 for

its forceful effect. Since the students have a high proficiency level in English, which enable them to produce elaborated sentences in L2, their aggravated L1 disagreements might be due to the lack of strong rapport between students and their instructors, which is always the case in the first few weeks of class. The students also resorted to L1 to grab the teachers' attention to their slips and to demand a strong justification for what they thought to be inaccuracies.

The use of positive politeness strategies. The results indicate that Egyptian undergraduates apply both positive and negative politeness strategies when disagreeing with their instructors. However, the use of some positive politeness strategies with power superiors such as humour, though it occurred only a few times, was uncommon in similar studies like that of Rees-Miller (2000). Rees-Miller (2000) found that the students in her study did not use humour as a positive politeness strategy with their professors. She believes that by including the professor in the students' group, which is lower in status, or by trying to establish a common ground with the professor through humour, this could be an insult to the professor's status and knowledge. Also Jameson (2004) clarifies that "humour may also be used to minimize power-distance and emphasize equality or connection" (p. 261), and thus, one could argue that humour is not favoured when addressing people of higher power. This brings us back to the critiques of Brown and Levinson's (1987) work, which posited that culture and community of practice norms should be taken into consideration when deciding what is polite or impolite (Mursy, 2009; Locher, 2006). A closer look at many factors, such as the dynamics of the classroom and the context in which disagreements occur, would suggest in the current study that the use of humour by these Egyptian students, when combined with L1 contributed to limit the threat that disagreement might have imposed on the teacher. The researcher also suggests that

power differences might have been the driving force behind the use of positive politeness softeners. Since this was the students' third class, they were trying to establish rapport with the instructor who is a power superior by using the in-group language L1 and humour.

5.3.2 Student-student disagreement and social distance factor. A few aggravated disagreements were documented between peers during classroom discussions, which can be attributed to the distant social distance between some of the students as well as other factors. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), distant social distance is closely tied to more politeness strategies being applied to an FTA. Another reason why students rarely used aggravated disagreements was that they were never invited by the teacher to express their opinions about their peers' assumptions, which was, in fact, what they mentioned in their interviews. This is further supported by Lawson (2009), who stated that "for example, a formal debate setting clearly encourages opposition, but audience participation in a public lecture obviously makes it difficult to raise one's personal points of disagreement" (p. 42).

The previous paragraph offers some explanation why negative politeness strategies specifically were very common among peers (44%), a finding that was similar to that of Walkinshaw (2007). In his study, Walkinshaw (2007) found that Japanese EFL learners tended to use more hedging and complicated strategies with their peers, suggesting that some of those who used hedging were being considerate of the face demands of their peers. In the present study, all of the students were freshmen and were trying to maintain good relationships with their peers. Thus, they were more inclined to weaken their assumptions and claims, favouring hedging to preserve the face demands of the addressees. It is also noteworthy that social distance and the fact that some students have power over their classmates, specifically for being better

students and having strong argumentative skills, account for the use of negative politeness strategies in several situations.

5.3.3 The effect of the type of interactional activity on peers'

disagreement. Aggravated disagreements which are marked by aggravated intonation or serious facial expressions made up about 53% of the total number of turns when the students were debating. In this situation, the high percentage of aggravated disagreements is explained by researchers such as Locher (2004) and Rees-Miller (2000), who claimed that "in the natural data, aggravated disagreement occurred precisely in those situations in which the speaker's personal beliefs or identity would be unacceptably challenged if she/he did not speak forcefully" (p. 1100). In the case of the debate mentioned in this study, the students used aggravated disagreements for two reasons: either to defend their own stances or to impress the teacher with their negotiation and speaking skills, which they thought would make them win the argument. This echoes Bolander's (2012) study in which he found that group purpose and topic of discussion are both factors which may influence how participants realize disagreements. That is, as the two groups' main goal was to show that they have strong argumentative skills and that they can win the argument, this resulted in their employment of various disagreement strategies, mainly aggravated ones. Another interpretation regarding the high-frequency usage of aggravated disagreement is the close social distance between the first two participants in the debate. (Refer to Fig. 2.)

5.4 Implications

Several implications can be stated. For a more fruitful and engaging educational context, students should be invited by the teacher to reflect on their peers' discussions. The teacher who has the privilege of being superior in power to his/her students is the one who has the greater responsibility of setting the norms and expectations in his/her

classroom. Thus, it would be helpful if the teacher encourages students to take part in group discussions and conflicts in order to ensure beneficial learning (Rees-Miller, 2000).

The findings of the study suggest that some students are unaware of the politeness strategies and mitigating devices that they use to soften disagreements. Thus, one suggestion is that the explicit teaching of pragmatics and speech acts could ameliorate efficient communication in EFL classrooms. That is, pragmatics should be part and parcel of EFL classrooms in a university setting to prepare the students for a highly-competitive job market in which native speakers of English and nonnative speakers are not uncommon. Furthermore, pointing out how NSs disagree with people of different statuses is very important to ensure that no pragmatic transfer from L1 to L2 would occur, which might result in serious misunderstandings.

Teachers should also direct the students' attention to the fact that strong disagreements can be the norm in some cases, such as arguments with friends, while in other situations, especially when addressing persons of higher power, they should be softened. Thus, preventing students from the expression of strong disagreements might in some situations seem to be disingenuous. Fernandez (2013) states that "Hence, in a friendly setting, if a NNS employs a mitigated disagreement to argue about food preferences, for example, it might be considered rather distant by NSs. NNSs should be aware of the fact that strong disagreements are not necessarily dispreferred acts. When engaging in certain topics, it appears that strong disagreements are the norm" (p. 61). That is, it is quite important to introduce EFL learners to the norms and expectations of NSs with regards to the use of this speech act.

The students' use of L1 in EFL classrooms should be given adequate attention, meaning that the teacher should draw an explicit distinction between situations in which the use of L1 helps establish rapport and a common ground between speakers of different power statuses, and those situations in which L1 might aggravate FTAs, such as the case with some of the arguments with the teacher, who has more power. The students should be aware of the fact that code switching and the use of L1 make disagreement sometimes more serious and that the target language in such cases is more preferable to mitigate the force of disagreement.

Lawson (2009) highlighted a very interesting issue which is that students need to be well acquainted with the common phrases used in arguments among NSs. He emphasized that EFL learners should have a better understanding of how to respond to phrases such as "No way!", and "That's ridiculous", which are frequent in English language discussions.

5.5 Limitations.

The current research is not without limitations. Longer hours of observation would have led to more significant results based on a larger amount of data.

Another limitation, can be found in the main method for collecting data in the present study, observation, were undertaken during the first three weeks of the semester with first-year students and thus led to the social distance not being a strong variable in this study. However, if a similar study was conducted with older students or with the same students towards the end of the semester, the researcher might have found different results as the students' social relationships may have had time to strengthen.

Moreover, other interviews with the teachers would have given deep insights in to how teachers feel about students' disagreement, allowing for more reliable and in-depth-analysis would have been given.

Finally, the findings of this study should not be generalized to a larger population. That is, the findings are specific to the context in which the practical research took place.

For further research directions, other studies that explore the effect of variables like gender and proficiency level on students' disagreement strategies would enrich and add to the rather low number of available studies of disagreements among Egyptian EFL learners.

5.6 Conclusion

The present research aimed to investigate how Egyptian undergraduates disagree with their teachers and their peers in EFL classrooms as well as the politeness strategies that they employ. The study also explored how factors such as the type of interactional activities and social distance influence the way the students disagree with their peers. Furthermore, how the students disagree with their power superiors, namely their teachers, regarding topic and context-specific discussions was also examined.

Based on the results and the analysis of 90 turns of disagreement, several conclusions can be drawn. First, there are no significant differences in the usage frequency of positive and negative politeness strategies that students employ to express disagreement towards the teachers. Second, the use of humour when disagreeing with teachers was not unlikely in this study. In fact, it softened the threat of disagreement in some instances, rather than being an insult to the teacher's

knowledge. Third, the context was a strong factor in the student's preferences for some mitigating and politeness strategies such as the use of justifications especially when expressing disagreement with the teacher. Unlike other studies that reported fewer instances of aggravated disagreements with professors, the current study found that the students expressed strengthened disagreements with a total of 37% of the total number of disagreement turns related to context-specific issues (refer to table 4.4). Perhaps, the students' rejection of what they thought to be inaccuracies is the reason behind their use of aggravated disagreement. Another reason is the students' need to impress their teachers with the knowledge they think they have due to their high proficiency level and that most of them received their education in reputable international schools, outweigh consideration of the teachers' face needs, rather than the assumption that they ignore power differences.

Concerning disagreements with classmates, the current research confirmed previous studies' findings about the use of hedging between peers. In the present study, aggravated disagreements were infrequent among students who were trying to build friendships in their first semester, except in situations such as a debate. In the debate, the students used aggravated disagreements to win the argument rather than threatening the addressee's face. Similarly, positive politeness strategies, specifically token agreements, were used at points in the debate by the students to preserve their own face and become less prone to criticism by the Hs. Thus, the conclusion can be made that power, social distance, and, most importantly, the context and the type of interactional activities, such as a formal debate, all interface with the students' employment of politeness strategies when disagreeing with both the teacher and their peers. Social distance was not a strong factor in this study with regards to its influence on peers' disagreement; however, hedging and aggravated disagreement might be one

of the strategies used with peers who are trying to develop a strong connection with each other or with peers of close social distance.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Demographic data survey (adapted from Niroomand, 2013)

Age:

Gender:

Have you lived in an English speaking country before? If yes, for how many years?

Are you a graduate of public school or an international one?

What has your English study focused on (grammar, translation, speaking, reading and writing skills?)

How often do you use English outside of the school or university?

In what situations do you use English outside of the classroom? (Ex: chatting online with friends, chatting with English native speakers, listening to music, watching English movies)

Appendix B: Observation protocol

Disagreement strategies	Indicators/definitions	Examples	Frequency
Positive politeness strategy	<p>Humour (L 2, L1, L1 slang) PPH</p> <p>Token agreement: To appear to agree or to hide disagreement.PPA</p>	Yes, but it's a way easier (with the intention of hiding disagreement)	
Negative politeness strategies	<p>Questions NPQ</p> <p>I think / I guess NPH</p> <p>Counter claims: providing additional option, limiting the scope of previous claims. cc do not directly contradict previous claims NPCC</p>	<p>"Why not"</p> <p>"I think it's a disadvantage not an advantage"</p> <p>S: "he is going to pass the exam"</p> <p>S: "But, he does not study".</p>	
Softened contradictions	Contradictions might be softened by verbal and non-verbal justification (OCON+JUST)	"No, because....."	
Neither softened	Contradiction (by	"No ..."	

nor strengthened	<p>using negative or positive markers. OCON</p> <p>Verbal shadowing: repeating the speaker's utterance intonation.</p> <p>OVS</p>	<p>"yes, it do "</p> <p>T: "To drive in is to hammer"</p> <p>S: "To hammer!"</p>	
Aggravated disagreement	<p>Discourse markers "of course" and L1 markers (ADL)</p> <p>Challenge: (L1, L2) demanding the addressee to provide evidence for his/her claim. ADC</p> <p>Irrelevancy claims: The speaker asserts that the previous claim is off topic. ADIR</p> <p>Aggravated verbal shadowing through voice intonation AOVS</p>	<p>"Of course I wasn't...."</p> <p>"I don't have a problem aslant"</p> <p>(I don't have a problem in the first place)</p> <p>"?zay?" (How come?)</p> <p>"Both terms have the same definitions, so what's the difference?!"</p> <p>"That's not the point"</p>	
Non Verbal cues	<p>Facial expressions. NVF</p> <p>Gestures NVG</p> <p>Laughter NVL</p>		

Appendix C: Conversation elicitation tasks**(Prepared but not used as explained in chapter 3 section 3.4)****Students will be asked to respond to the following controversial topics**

Human Resources shouldn't be allowed to ask questions about an applicant's marital status, religion, age, medical history, or immigration status.

Companies shouldn't look at prospective employees' social media profiles.

The *lingua franca* for doing business should be English and more companies should demand English proficiency from their employees.

Social media sites should be blocked at work.

Appendix D: Survey on participants' relationships to classmates

Sociogram survey

Fill in the chart using the information below next to each name on the list

To answer "How well do you know this person?" write "A", "B" or "C" (and if you choose C, please provide the details listed in C1-C6):

- A. Someone I know only from this class
- B. Someone I know currently from other classes or from campus activities at the Arab Academy
- C. Someone I have known for several years

If you chose "C", please provide more information by selecting from options C1-C6:

- C1. Classmate in elementary or middle school
- C2. Classmate in high school
- C3. Neighbour
- C4. Friend; friend of a friend; family friend
- C5. Relative
- C6. I have other connections to this person

For the "level of familiarity" please choose any of the 5 answers below:

- 1. I never or rarely speak to this person, even in class.

(If you select (1) for level of familiarity, please provide more detail by choosing from options 1a, 1b , 1c, or 1d)

- We don't speak much together because
- (1a) we don't sit near each other in class
 - (1b) we have never been assigned to work together in pairs or group work
 - (1c) we have nothing in common
 - (1d) other reason _____

2. I sometimes speak to this person during class (group work when assigned as a group together) but we don't normally meet outside of class.
3. I interact frequently/occasionally talk to this person before/during/after class on campus (working on class assignments, frequent group or pair work in class)
4. This person is a friend of mine and we "hang out" on campus together to eat, drink coffee, etc./get together socially off campus
5. This person is a close friend of mine and we interact ("hang out") together both on campus and off campus

Your full name is:

Name	How well do you know this person?	The level of familiarity
A	Someone I know only from this class	We don't speak much together because (1a) we don't sit near each other in class
B		
C		
D		

Appendix E: Interview questions.

Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Appendix F: Transcripts and coding of disagreements

Student-teacher disagreements transcripts

Excerpt 1

T: so you mean getting financial aids from parents? =

S: = **No, from schools** OCON

Excerpt 2

S: What about getting a job? =

T: = It's not common here in Egypt=

S: = **No, sometimes** OCON

Excerpt 3

T: Some people think that business is boring it loses its glamour by time,
what do you think? =

S: **I disagree, nothing loses its glamour. All jobs are needed so
they never lose their glamour by time OCON+ JUST**

Excerpt 4

T: ((talking about the AC))

It's not working, I guess they are putting it as a piece of eh: =

S: = **No, it works** = OCON

T: = Really?

Excerpt 5

T: = Everywhere you go you find people asking for recruiters=

S: = Only graduates get par time jobs=

T: = Who said so?!=

S: = **I saw it before in companies and school**= NPCC

Excerpt 6

- T: Those who want to state their experience right away,
don't you think that first I have to like other people said
ice break things a bit, have something like an introduction=
- S1: = **It's a formal letter!** =OCON
- S2: = they have your CV=

Excerpt 7

- T: Let me give you my sentence if you are interested,
I said because expectations increase, work load expands
((The teacher repeats the sentence))=
- T: ((she is moving to the last paragraph)) the last paragraph
- S: **I disagree with you**= OCON
- T: = You disagree with my sentence, why? =
- S: = **Because he didn't say there is a workload on people**= JUST
- T: = Let's read it again, you don't believe that he is mentioning
here workload, actually he mentions work load

Excerpt 8

- T: ((reading the question))
They contacted corporate clients by phones and presented incentive travel
programs to board of directors they recruited and trained new sales reps, or
trained and recruited, by the way they are interchangeable. =
- S: =< L2 L2 > **la, recruited el ?wel and then trained**
'No, recruited first and then trained' = OCON
- T: = Some people train and then recruit,
I would accept both answers, and there
is an argument about this.

Excerpt 9

- T: ((looking for someone to answer the question))
 Then the last one, eh:: yes your name is.. Karim, karim yes =
- S: **((in a disappointed and sarcastic tone))**
 =**Hassan** = Aggravated OCON
- T: = Hassan, I'm sorry.

Excerpt 10

Students are discussing the pros and cons of using technology at work place

- S: Technology harms people machine its part of technology so
 It harms people, you read less...=
- T: = You what else? =
- S: =You read less and less social interaction=
- T: =Okay, wow Facebook and twitter and so on=
- Ss: =**No we mean at the work place**= OCON
- S: = You are not talking just sitting eh ((uses body language to show typing

Excerpt 11

- T: So, to drive in is to hammer =
- S: = **To hammer!** = AOVS
- T: = If I say I need to drive in a nail in the wood,
 so this mean you are going to hammer it in=
- S: =**Driving in should be something more smooth.** NPCC

Excerpt 12

- T: ((before playing the listening)) We can turn off the fans
- S: **((using body language to show it's hot.))** NVG

Excerpt 13

T: Exercise number you have two extracts from a CV
 this will help you later on in order to write your own CV,
 we 'r gonna do that, this will be three weeks from now, you
 will write different formats of CV=

S: =(**frowning**) =NVF

T: ((teacher smiles))
 = This is ve: ry easy

Excerpt 14

Teacher writing on board and heard a student talking

T: You are going to have a writing quiz; this is out of five marks,
 Ok ya X?
 ((The girl smilingly uses her both hands to ask what's wrong and to give
 the impression that she was not the only one talking, so why would the
 teacher call her name)) NVG

Excerpt 15

T: Today we are going to start with the grammar=

S: ((the student is unhappy about the teacher's NVF
 decision of starting with grammar))
 = **frowning** =

T: =maʃleʃ yā Lama.
 'Never mind Lama'

Excerpt 16

T: I think the best method will be looking for scholarship,
 you don't have to pay but needs to fulfil certain requirements=

S: ((**humourously**))

=walāhī ?na momken ?taba? flūs men suḥābī **PPH**

'I myself can borrow money from my friends'

T: = So borrowing

Excerpt 17

T: So could u give an example? Your colleague said "dramatic change"
so this change is on all levels or a lot of levels? =

Ss: = a lot of levels=

T: =so it's not everything, its' 90%, so dramatically is significantly =

S: ((Humourously))

=?ana mef maktaneʿa. PPH

'I am not convinced'

Excerpt 18

T: Any other reasons why did you join this college in particular
((College of business))? =

S: =It's the easiest=

T: = So you don't want to bother yourself with studying something
that is a bit difficult, so you chose it because it's the easiest! Tourism
is easier by the way =

S: =**Yes, but business is a way easier than tourism because of the
career opportunities PPA+ JUST**

Excerpt 19

Teacher discussing what people should and shouldn't do when writing cover letter

T: People like to use this kind of language sophisticated language
to leave good impression, this is not right by the way =

S: = **Yes, but you're like speaking with someone...what do you say?**

... professional person so he will understand these things

rather than PPA+JUST
 T: I agree but what he really means
 by sophisticated language is really
 technical hard language.

Excerpt 20

T: Sabbatical means unpaid vacation=
 S: = ((trying to show the teacher the definition on the mobile))
But.../? / paid OCON+ JUST

Excerpt 21

Ss: develop objectives =
 T: = do we say develop objectives?!=
 Ss: = no, doubled=
 T: ((giving the missing word))
 =exceeded objectives, you exceed your objectives;
 you know objectives are aims and targets and you exceed those targets.
 S: =**Yes, but this one ((he means exceeded))**
goes with the second one= PPA+JUST

Excerpt 22

S disagreeing with a the teacher's comment about writing dear Mr./Ms. at the beginning of cover letter

S: When there is a job advertisement in a newspaper,
 they just write like a job description eh: like
 expected experience
 T: yes from 3 to 5 experi
 S: = **Yes, but they don't mention the person you
 are sending in the CV, so why you write
 dear Mr. /MS? PPA+ JUST**

Excerpt 23

- S: Why does the writer use short sentences?
- T: This is his writing style
- S: **Yes but, he shouldn't use it to avoid people getting distracted PPA+JUST**

Excerpt 24

The teacher and the student are arguing which word collocates best with "password", is it "enter" or "set up"

- S: **yes, but he said /? / PPA+ JUST**

Excerpt 25

- S: ((commenting on the teacher's choice of the phrase "keep me updated")):
((he wanted to use keep me informed instead))
el fekrā you can also inform
'The thing is that you can also inform' NPH+NPCC

Excerpt 26

- T: ((reading the question and answer))
 Tele sales operators managed and motivated
 a team of 40 telesales operators. =
- S: **=if I switched? If I said motivated and managed? = NPQ**
- T: **=It's acceptable**

Excerpt 27

- S: **Tāyeb, Why was not chaired used instead of managed a team? = NPQ**
- T: **= maybe it has to do with the proposals, usually when you
 have a proposal, people present new ideas, so they must
 have a person who takes the final decision at the end, ok? so
 that's why she chose it so chair a working party and drew up a**

proposal so usually people making decisions somehow are limited group and they must have a leader who takes a decision later on. =

Excerpt 28

S: **howwa mef ʔl 4th sentence ehh- el mafrōd regretting? =**

'Shouldn't the 4th sentence be regretting?' NPQ

T: = yes, something-- not necessarily regretting but I mean you are talking about a past action that was already taking place or an action that has to take place and you said that it hadn't

S: = *They gained fame..wh--y w--h ʔzay sad?! = ADC*

'why "They gained fame" is a sad thing?'

T: = Not necessarily sad...you just...the third conditional maybe I am conf- I am just giving you the majority of the situations, the majority would have this element of regret.

Excerpt 29

T: ((giving feedback to a student's answer)) Yes, goes down excellent, so if the system goes down it takes days to fix it =

S: = **Why not crashes? NPQ**

Excerpt 30

S: Dismissed and laid off them are the same? =

T: = No, they are not

S: **((The student had a sarcastic facial expression))**

= dismissed is fired and laid off is fired, so what's the difference?! ADC

Excerpt 31

T: It's easier to  upgrade components =

Ss: = **ʔzay?! ADC**

Excerpt 32

Answering an if-conditional question

T: Every single time he forgets his umbrella, it rains,
so it happens all the time, since it's something that
is fixed

S: <L2L2> but it's not a fact, **?zay** fact?! **OCON**

T: =something that is always always true. =

S: = ((sarcastic tone))

if he forgot his umbrella in summer, it will rain?!

ADC

T: = if he is unlucky person, it will rain

S: ((looks disappointedly to his friend and not convinced))

Excerpt 33

S: ?āxer waḥde leih mef upload? el mafrūd upload=

' The last one why not upload?!', it is supposed to be upload'

Ss: = ?hda yā ʕam mef keda=

'calm down'

T: ((laughing))its'ok, it'sok

Excerpt 34

T: This is writing you are not supposed to be cheating=

S: ((smiling and surprised at the same time))

= **Of course**, I am not cheating

T: ((The teacher did not comment and continued grading the other papers she had))

S: ((whispering to her friend))

?zay ?ʕef?

'How come I cheat?'

Excerpt 35

T: X, you still have a problem? =

S: ((in a disappointed tone))

= < L2 L2> maʕandīf ʔslan problem

'I didn't have problem in the first place' ADI

Excerpt 36

The teacher initiated a discussion with the researcher about the reasons for not having a Facebook account and she suggested broadening the discussion to include her students.

T: I am claiming, I have the right to claim whatever, I am saying that social media and so on are making our lives or social media is making our life harder today, it's really making our life more stressful today, this is what I am claiming let's see what do you think but support your point, let me start with the nice beautiful lady, tell me what you think and what S1 and S2 think

S1: **I disagree, it's easier, I get to know new people with different cultures and different beliefs, and you can video chat with relatives studying abroad**
OCON+NPJUST

S2: **it's easier to organize events) NPCC**

T: let me ask you a question, how many hours do you spend today using Facebook?

S3 (excluded): I don't use it, I have it, I don't use it

T: so why do you have it?

S: because you guys should

T: see, social pressure, *you should have it*

S: ((waving with her hands)) no no because of education because now schools post home works, you guys post papers on Facebook

T: X group, what do you think?

S4: **((Disagreeing with the teacher hint that students might be using Facebook for many hours a day))**

I disagree with you, it makes life easier, it use minimal amount of time.

OCON+ JUST

S5: **I think it wastes a lot of time, when you go in any cafes or anything right now you see all the people just on their phones not even socially**

interacting with each other and when they go to like eh: a new place or something they spend their time taking pictures eh: not enjoying their time there PPA

T: yeah, the actual journey itself or the—the yes the sightseeing, /? / You actually spend more time

S: it takes a lot of time

T: take photos and post on Facebook

S5: **You waste a lot of time one because you have more than one social network like eh: whatever Facebook, Instagram, snapshot, twitter, eh: what's app if you spend like 10 minutes on each of those**

T: I use what's'

app, actually /? /

S5: **It's a long time to use it, but it's useful in marketing, in making events, in anything eh:, knowing what happening around you**

S6: **actually I think it's a dis.disadvantage not to have social media because everybody is using it so eh: NPH+ JUST**

S7: **I disagree OCON**

T: you disagree, why?

S7: **Because social media makes communication with each other easier and we can know the news of our country or any country JUST**

Student-student disagreements transcripts

Excerpt 1

T: customs vary from country to country, one of the best solutions is to... ((waiting for an answer) a loan =

S: = obtain but I am not sure =

T: = what do you think? =

Ss: = arrange OCON

T: =Yes, arrange a student's loan.

Excerpt 2

T: What does the word dramatically mean? =

S1: dramatically is extremely=

S2: ((avoiding eye contact with her classmate))

= no, it's significantly OCON

Excerpt 3

T: =What does the word dull mean? =

S1: =Over simplification=

S2: =I?, its' boring OCON

Excerpt 4

T: What do you think this lesson is actually about?

S: =Tense

T: Tenses? Are we talking about tenses here? What is the common factor in all four

S:L? conditional if OCON

Excerpt 5

T: ((Discussing methods of payment))

Would you like to have banks financing studies? =

Ss: = Yes=

S: = No, maybe in Egypt you ((he means undergrads))

cannot get a job so you can't pay back the loans OCON+JUST

Excerpt 6

X disagrees with her peer's support to the use of social media

S: I am against it just for one reason; it lowers your self-esteem because you have to keep up with the challenges and image of perfection
OCON+JUST

Excerpt 7

T: Do you think the market offers good part time jobs? =

Ss: = No =

S: ((the utterance followed the students answer, so it was considered by the researcher a disagreement to peers))

= **Yes** = OCON

T: who said yes?

((Student raised up his hands))

T: yes X =

S1: = There are very good part time jobs, Vodafone UK I worked 4to 5 hours and got 15 hundreds, I worked 6 days JUST

S2: = It's not easy here in Egypt to have part time jobs=NPCC

Excerpt 8

Discussing if they should start a cover letter with Dear Sir or madam

T: X what are you saying? =

S1: =No =

T: =Why no? =

S: =It's not kind of formal way to...

T: X is saying no because it's not a formal way of writing,
 Yes? =

S2: =Yes, it's a formal way OCON

T: So we have two conflicting ideas, one is saying yes it's formal and the other one is saying no it's not formal, what do you think?

S3: Sir is formal but dear is not formal =

- T: = So is it yes or no? =
- S3: ((disagreement to S2 claim)) = **It's no**= OCON
- S4: **((disagreeing with S2))**
- =**I think we should mention... the name of the...employer NPH+NPCC**

Excerpt 9

- S1: ((answering an if conditional question))
- I wouldn't have done=
- S2: = **I wouldn't do**:: OCON+Aggravated

Excerpt 10

- S1: I think using sophisticated language should be *do*
- S1: because it will give you a good impression
- S2: **((S2 reported in his interview that he was convinced with his own point of view but he prefers not to be defensive))**
- I am not sure (negative politeness) (NPH)**
- S1: The cover letter is before the CV so this will leave a good impression
- S2: Let's see, leave it for the discussion

S2: **no** OCON

Excerpt 11

- T: Which methods do you prefer? we will have different methods of paying for college for business school which method do you prefer?
- ((Class silent))
- Come on guys, we are not going to have boring classes throughout you are the A class by the way =
- S1: = to subsidize=
- T: = eh:: you need somebody to subsidize for you, ok:, the government or your employer? =

S: = employer=

T: I think it's a good method I agree, do u agree with ehh

S1: X

T: X. X is saying having a subsidy is the best method, what do you think guys? =

S2: =I don't think it's possible, not in Egypt NPH

Excerpt 12

S1: I used subsidize =

S2: = I don't think it's subsidize NPH

Excerpt 13

S1: The ones who get over 99% get scholarships=

S2: I guess over 95%= NPH

S1: = No, full scholarships over 99% but people above 95% less fees OCON

Excerpt 14

T: Yes X, what do you think, I should write a formal introduction in the first paragraph

S1: Yes

T: What do you think he means by formal introduction?

S: He means greetings

T: I am going to somehow employ the first paragraph for greetings; do you think this is ok?

((X nodding))

T: Why not?

S2: I think he should eh directly talk about his experience in job, you don't have to write too many greetings NPH+NPCC

T: So again we have two opposite ideas Nadine says that we have somehow to directly talk why am I writing the letter and sheriff is saying that I have to somehow to use the first paragraph to greet the person I am sending the letter to, which one do you think is correct?

S3: **I think in the first paragraph we should start saying our name and age eh general information about ourselves and then slowly we start talking about our experience and skills. (Disagreeing with sheriff)NPH+NPCC**

Excerpt 15

T: What does give in a notice mean? =

S1: = teʔdem 2stkaltk=

'to resign' =

S2:= <L2 L2> **but, informing two weeks before ʔestkalā OCON**

Excerpt 16

S1 and S2 are discussing the pros and cons of social media

S2: It may be used eh like in bad things like... hacking=

S1: = **Yes but in the work place it's like you/? /, /because technology is in our place not in your life PPA+JUST**

Excerpt 17

T: do you agree with that, having technology nowadays produces or forces you to eh: work more not less

Ss: Yes

S: **Only if it's not organized NPCC**

Excerpt 18

T: What does the word considerable mean? =

S1: yoʔxaz bihī

'to be considered'

T: =can you give me examples

S1: =concern is.....

T: =no not concern=

S2: **((humourously))**

Considerably ʔeir concern PPH

'Considerably is different from concern'

Excerpt 19

Debate about which is better workplace without technology 50 years ago or today

S1: In the past there are you better communication with among each other ya3ny
eh: and: in the present now they all isolated and they sit apart and separated so
there is a weak point

Other group: ((humourously))

We object PPH

S2: **It's a working environment I don't need to communicate with all my
colleagues; it's a waste of time ADIR**

S1: **It's not a waste of time; we are building friendships with the other**

people { OCON+NPJUST

{ S2: there is around

S2: **I don't have to build relationships while I am working ADIR**

S1: **What's the point of working somewhere we don't talk to anyone and have
a boring working life and mix your social life with anyone else?! = ADC**

S3: = Ok ah in the present like in the picture you have a break lunch , in the
break time you can go and eat and communicate with you're eh:

Girls: /? / =

S3: **=Why would I talk while working while I can talk while I am in the
break? =ADC**

Girls: =/? /=

S4: **It's not about being in a friendship or something, eh: we understand that
it's about work**

{ S3: ok

S4: **= but it's about communicating and sharing thoughts** PPA

{ S3: I can

S4: = so you can be creative in what you do

- S3: I can be a more productive myself like in an isolated eh: place and then while I am in the break lunch I can communicate and look for the ideas I need. = NPCC
- S1: = **in the lunch you: you rest you don't talk about work=NPCC**
- S3: = **you do** OCON
- S5: **During lunch break don't you talk about college?** = ADC
- S4: **(in a very challenging tone)) No** OCON+Aggravated
- S6: Sometimes computers are not efficient
- S2: ((ironic)) **Are you more efficient than a computer?!!** ADC
- S3: Maybe they're writing a project with their hands, will be faster to write with your hands or on a keyboard? ADC
- S6: but **it's more secured** OCON+NPCC
- S7: ((talking about the disadvantage of technology)) People were more creative and imaginative but nowadays you can Google anything. =
- S3: = **what if I am working in a field where a creative is not a requirement?** ADC=
- S7: = **ok but this is... there is no field on earth where creativity is not a requirement** = PPA
- S3: ((talking about technology)) will it generate more revenue for the company or not? = ADC
- S7: = **ok but you will be un employed.** PPA+NP CC
- S2: A better working atmosphere =
- S1: = **(challengingly)) How?** = ADC
- S7: eh: **but there are computer harms** =OCON+NPCC
- S2: = **I am not talking about computer; I am talking about the whole environment.** ADIR
- S3: ((talking about how computers create a better working environment)) **Isn't it more organized than the past?!** = ADC
- S7: =**That's another point** ADIR
- S3: = no the working atmosphere OCON
- S3: Do you think sitting next to everyone sweating create a better working atmosphere? ADC
- S7: = **It's a bit tiring, but maybe** /? / PPA

- S1: **It's very depressing to sit alone on computers. NPCC**
- S7: In the past, there was easier supervision on employees, like they are all sitting and their work is in front of them so you can easily eh: know where are the faults and the errors but nowadays the computers actually may /?/ higher per cent of cheating=
- S3: Cheating in what ways?!= ADC
- S7: = like eh: stealing your ideas =
- S3: **It would be more susceptible to stealing your ideas since you are all packed up together and you have the papers next to each other. NPCC**

Appendix G: Transcripts of interviews

Interview 1

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Of course, if it's about certain (fear) or something, yeah of course. If it's about talking in classroom, you're talking back to the teacher, of course not "bas"(but), if she uhm if she says something like an open opinion and you're saying your opinion and it doesn't agree with the teacher, yes of course. No no no I can say it if I disagree with something she's saying, an idea that doesn't have to do with ethics or anything like that that's already established, yeah I have my right to say that.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points? Would you disagree with the teacher on any of these aspects?

Student: Of course. If it's a writing or something, and she graded me a grade I didn't deserve or I feel like I didn't deserve, I should ask her why she did that, obviously, to not repeat the mistake again, and yeah I feel like should ask her to just show her that I actually think that I don't deserve this grade, so it's like I have self-confidence enough to ask her that I don't deserve this grade.

Investigator: What if a teacher gives you feedback which you think is not convincing?

Student: Ok, I think in English in particular, I think in other subjects I wouldn't do that, if in math or something like that I'm not confident enough, I don't know much about it, but if in English if I have a background, and not background, if I have like something to go back to like grammar I have knowledge of grammar, yeah I can actually tell her that I don't agree with that and should try to convince her of my point of view because I think in English there's no right and wrong, when it comes in (lessons) are really clear, I don't think there's right wrong in it, so yeah.

Investigator: Would you disagree with her the same way you do while discussing a certain topic?

Student: Like with my friends? Yeah, I think so as long as I'm being polite as long as I'm not like crossing over anything, yeah I think so. I don't think that there should be like a wall, I should feel uncomfortable talking to her about what I feel, so yeah I think so.

Investigator: What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

Student: No I think she would feel different obviously, uhm but if she understands what the class is about, if she understands and she values student contribution, yeah I think she'll be more acceptable, and if I feel during my first impression, if I feel that she's not accepting of my opinion, I don't think I'd actually tell her later on and I don't think I'd go into an argument, which in the end of the day it's beneficial for both of us, like she comes out with like knowledge or shouldn't know something that I know there's nothing wrong with that, obviously and I might be convinced with her point of view, so if she just kind of pushes me if she's like rejecting of it I might not feel comfortable to do that.

Investigator: Which one of the two categories (topic & context-specific aspects) she might be less comfortable with.

Student: If I give her comments about her language input or the way she teaches?

Investigator: Yes. Obviously, I'm not gonna give her input on the way she teaches but as more of like if she has an opinion of something that is broad and that can accept a lot of different opinions, if I give her my opinion that she is not acceptable I think that's a little bit different than say if she opens class discussion about anything in the book or something and we have to input and stuff like that.

Investigator: Have you noticed any kind of disagreement in Classroom that you thought might be challenging?

Student : I don't think it ever gets too personal in an argument, like once it gets too personal, I think both parties feel uncomfortable and but I never witnessed that it got to that point it was always like her point of view and my point of view and really never got personal. I was not personally like disagreeing with her I was disagreeing with her opinion so it never really got personal.

Investigator: What kind of disagreement you consider to be challenging?

Student: Yes, crossing the border?

Investigator: Yes

Student: It's about the way they say it not what they're saying. I didn't it's not like when I was in college maybe back when I was in school. It's the way they address the issue that matters they're doing it in like in a snobby way maybe that comes off as a little bit impolite, but as long as they're doing it just get the conversation going just talk to the teacher I don't think I never felt really uncomfortable about it.

Investigator: What really shows that the student is a snob?

Student: I think it's more body language and the way they raise their voice their tone elevates and stuff like that and if the issue they're discussing is really personal or it has to do maybe obviously, that never happened in the English

class, if it has to do with politics or things that are really sensitive that's when things get uncomfortable.

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: No I never felt uncomfortable doing it. The more I know the person I'm disagreeing with, the more comfortable I feel ,uhm because if someone I don't know, he's just an acquaintance and I'm doing it they might take it personally, which I won't ever do, but if they take it personally, but my friends they won't do that.

Investigator: So with a distant social distance, would you avoid or be careful?

Student: In a careful way. I wouldn't go on if I say something that they disagree and I won't go long enough because I'll be scared they get too personal maybe, but if it's my friends, yeah I would never mind.

Investigator: What do you think of classmates saying that they have to invite by the teacher to disagree with their peers?

Student: I understand but if you are interrupting them, if they're in the middle of stating their opinion and just interrupt, I think it's impolite whether they are friend or not, but if they're done and you're saying your opinion as long as your being polite as long as you're caring for them their feelings, I don't think there's anything wrong with that. Personally, if that happened to me, I wouldn't disagree or feel uncomfortable.

If she's asking someone it's mainly in circle of group discussion so if she's asking someone other people will chime in and say their opinion.

Yea I know but especially in the English classes it's all about group discussion and I think if I was a teacher and I felt like one student stated an opinion and another one said another opinion, this would be beneficial for both of them and for the whole class and people will start saying what they want. I don't want a class full of silent people u know.

Investigator: Have you ever witnessed a kind of challenging disagreement between peers?

Student: Yea I think if they originally don't like each other, there's history between them and I think I've felt the tension but other people who don't know them and don't know their history, they won't feel the tension, but for me because I knew them personally I know they might have issues outside the classroom and then gets too personal and try to (whine up) each other and stuff like that so that's why.

Investigator: Did that take place in the class I observed?

Student: No, no. everyone in the English classroom is trying to make friends so we're really friendly with each other. Maybe afterwards in the third year or something like that when people start having relationships and start having arguments outside class and like that can establish a relationship, but now no

but it's kind of immature, right now I don't think it would happen in college, like people are more professional about it in the classroom disagreeing and there's nothing personal about it, so yeah.

Interview 2

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Depends. Is it a lecture or a section?

Investigator: Whatever

Student: If the professor is wrong, it is fine to correct him.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student: Sure, Ms. X, It's more lenient I guess (language input). So I express myself more freely, if we are having a debate, so it's not like a serious mood. So I'd be more open to like if she said something happens wrong, I'd be more willing to tell her. If when a serious lecture or something, I'd be less lenient about it if that makes any sense.

Investigator: What would you say if you disagree with the teacher about language input?

Student: I'd tell her... I'd like tell her why I think she's wrong. Maybe she's right but I don't know. Depends on the topic. I'm telling her why I think what I'm saying is right and why she is wrong and she's going to do the same thing. Yes, because I'm holding back the whole class. As in if I'm being too stubborn with uhm she keeps on explaining n I don't understand she keeps on explaining n I don't understand so I'd holding back the whole class. I know I know, I'd be holding back the whole class, if I'm disagreeing with something fundamental that I think is wrong, everyone is fine with it. If I keep disagreeing, that's explanation wise.

Investigator: What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

Student: Depends on the instructor. Some instructors are nice open to criticism and some are not. Depends on the instructor. Yes. Ah their personality I guess they think I'm gonna be holding back their lectures. Maybe they don't want someone to disagree with them. Can I give examples?

Student: Sure Ok. Ms. X is open to criticism but there's one I don't know his name he gives us X (a certain course) if you disagree with him, he's pretty much

make you stand up and he's going to make fun, he makes fun of everyone. Ok. Depends on the person. Ms. X is fine with it but he's not.

Investigator: Does the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the way you express disagreement with him/her?

Student: No, no, it's the same; because they are like they are older they have more experience on the subject. It'll be better because they have more experience on the subject. It does. Because I may have some naive thoughts about that subject, and he experienced that particular subject in real life so he has more experience and he knows that I'm wrong and he's right, Yeah, Yeah.
(Experience makes professor in higher position)

Investigator: Can you give me examples of disagreement that you thought to be challenging in class?

Student: Silly? (It should have been more lenient)

Investigator: It's Ok if you want to call it "silly"

Student : Uhm, there was umm I don't know what his name, X I think, Yes, There's like a common phrase in English and he disagreed about it but he was aggressive about it and there was someone making fun, even turned around and went aggressive towards him. So it was kind of... he had to be a little bit more lenient about it.

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers in a classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate? And I will refer to the debate.

Student: If anything, it's actually the most fun. Engaging. It's fun. I mean it depends on like if it's like X disagreeing because someone made fun then I'd make fun of them, but if it's for class purpose to disagree or debate then sure.

Investigator: what do you think makes disagreement appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: Uha. It can be appropriate if you are asked to do it. Inappropriate if umm, if the teacher is explaining the guys disagree on something and then the guys debate with each other.

Investigator: So, disagreement in such a situation is inappropriate?

Student: It is, because the teacher is explaining and you are debating. Sure.

Investigator: Would you turn around and disagree with your peer?

Student: No any a. I'll tell the teacher tell him if my way of putting it is right or not.

Investigator: I noticed that there isn't much interaction between peers, what do you think is the reason?

Student: Yes. I don't know if she's fine with it. (But if invited) If the other person is open for discussing, sure. Yes. I would.

Investigator: Did it you take the debate personal at one point? Was the point of view you were defending yours or you were just taking up the role the teacher asked you to do?

Student: No. I didn't. Ok. Yes. I thought that I was right. I was, because I thought I was right about what we were debating.

Investigator: So, you were not defending your stance just because the teacher asked you to do so?

Student: No, No I was actually convinced with what I said.

Investigator: Did you feel that any of your peers was serious about his/ her disagreement in debate?

Student : I think she was called X, She was wearing white, and then, when Ms. X said I like your attitude I wasn't sure if it was serious or not.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with them?

Student: I don't know anyone. I guess if people are really, really close, they'd take it more leniently; they'd be funny about it. They'd like make jokes and stuff while arguing. I would. But with people who are not close, I would like throw like pitch in my first argument and see how they respond. If they respond in a serious way or in a way that shows they are interested, I'll keep on responding the same way I did the first time. If they take it lightly, sure I'd be.

Investigator: Why most students avoid eye contacting their peers while disagreeing?

Student: We're both getting, like the teacher knows what the correct answer is so she's going to give me the correct answer right away. Because, the teacher will give me the correct answer right away if I gave eye contact maybe will engage in a discussion the teacher doesn't want to, so it's more straightforward.

Investigator: Why do you think some students use L1 when disagreeing while you have high proficiency level?

Student: I'd say it's more to do with the Egyptian society. because u speak English close to people who are very Egyptian they spent a lot of time in Egypt you would most likely to get (more tact) because they're used to argue in Arabic everything in Arabic so they'd argue in Arabic, because they think they get (more tact). , depends on the society.

Investigator: Which sounds more challenging English or Arabic?

Student: Arabic is more aggressive.

Interview 3

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Everyone has right to express disagreement as long as there are limits the other should respect it even if has different opinions, this how things work.

Investigator: What do you mean by limits?

Student: I mean by limits no shouting or physical action, they could punch each other.

Investigator: Did it happen before in a university setting?!

Student: According to the university itself to be honest, I've heard before on Facebook physical disagreement between two guys in a university, however it's something unusual. Everyone here respects disagreements

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student: That happened to me once with her, but she repeated the point I don't understand several points till I got it. Everyone has to disagree with his teacher.

Investigator: Can you give me an example of what you would say to your teacher if you are disagreeing, for example about her language input?

Student: I would say "professor, there is something against my point of view we need to discuss it if you can". I can't just tell the person "no I don't understand your point and I disagree with your point, this is not making sense to me". This is very aggressive have to take it slow

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: None of the disagreement happened in the university if the professor was there

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class?

Student: I don't differentiate between people even when I don't know them

Interview 4

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: I think it's normal, there should be disagreement in everything, something that is an advantage everyone is giving his opinion and know his friends ideas.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student: "I think it's the same; however I saw someone who was challenging but not in aggressive way, *wāḥed kār mṣānā fī class fa el teacher talbet menōh* to work in pairs [this one is a classmate in the English class, the teacher asked him to work in pairs]. I think he didn't accept the idea and he wanted to work alone. However, he said it in a polite way, not in aggressive way, but he was the only unique person who did this .It was something bizarre. Maybe he thinks that he is better than his peers. I think it shouldn't be that way. He should have said to the teacher "Ok" and told his classmates later on that he wanted to work alone".

Investigator: Do the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: No I use the same ways with all age groups and respect them.

Investigator :How would you justify not interacting with each other's in class or not showing disagreement towards each other's opinion whenever is possible ?

Student: I think because we didn't break the ice and because the whole thing is new. If someone says an opinion, I won't discuss it with him as long as the teacher is there. The teacher is bigger than me, so I can't disagree with my classmate directly in the presence of the teacher, I should show her some respect. But don't have to disagree with someone who is sitting far from me in class, and again mainly the discussions are with the teacher. Thus, if I disagree with someone, especially if I don't know him, I can't do it in front of other peers. At school we were friends, so we used to disagree even if were not sitting next to each other."

Investigator: Why did you say to your classmate "let's check with the teacher" when you were discussing two different answers for the question? Did you really doubt your answer?

Student: If he said and he said b I ask him to check not because I doubt my opinion but to see t what the teacher has to say. I was convinced with my own point of view, but I preferred to leave it for the teacher's discussion. I agree with X in most of his opinions, he is a great person.

Interview 5 [translated by the author]

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Yeah, it is ok. However, if it is related to class I will participate but if something not related to what we take in class I will not participate because I don't want to waste time

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student : If I have a problem with the teacher's explanation or I think that there might be something wrong in what she is saying, I will try not to be so "obvious in pointing the wrong thing" I will do it indirectly. As for disagreeing about a topic, the teacher is already willing to debate, so I will be more comfortable with disagreement, but also I will try to choose my words. All in all, it depends on the teacher, if I like her I will try not to point anything wrong in class and will avoid disagreement.

Investigator: Do the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: Yeah, especially if the professor is a way older than me, he/she will not allow disagreement, but if he/she is a bit older, I will disagree but also indirectly.

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: Yesterday, there was someone who disagreed in an aggressive way, that even his peers asked him why he was so nervous. I can't really remember what exactly he said, but I was shocked when he raised his voice and talked in such an aggressive way. I am sure he did not mean to be so harsh, but he had a very loud voice.

Investigator: What made you think that he didn't mean to be harsh?

Student: He didn't mean to be aggressive that's why he laughed when his peers asked him why he was so nervous. I really don't like people who use their body language a lot when disagreeing. This is entirely inappropriate.

Investigator: How about the debate was it serious at one point or you just did what the teacher asked you to do?

Student: One girl stuck to her opinion and she wanted to force it upon others, she has to understand that people do not have to take your stance. The three girls, who were taking down notes during the debate, were totally convinced of what they were saying and they were so defensive. However, I and other two

girls were not convinced of the point in discussion; we only joined the female group because the teacher asked us to do so.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class?

Student: Distant social distance makes me avoid disagreement so as not give a bad impression. I mean if someone doesn't know me, he might misunderstand me and interpret my disagreement negatively. On the contrary, a friend of mine will totally understand my true intentions when I disagree with him/her. And that's the main reason why I don't interact that much in the classroom. In other classes that, my friends take with me, I interact frequently with the teacher, unlike this class, where I don't have any friends.

Investigator: What about the use of Arabic when disagreeing, is there any specific reason for this?

Student: We always use Arabic because we are more used to it, and sometimes we use Arabic because we can't find the exact words in English needed to express ourselves.

Interview 6

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: I think it's acceptable as long as it is polite and to the point, it's acceptable. We all have different point of views we express them as long as it is polite. If not polite it's unacceptable.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student : *mef šārfā* [I don't know] I think she knows better ,but if not convinced I will discuss it with her until one of us is convinced, in both cases it will be polite. *Bas momken* [but I can be] be more careful when discussing something related to language input because it's her job.

Investigator: What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

Student: It depends if she is self-centred she will misunderstand me, but if her aim is to make me understand her point, she will do her best to reach this goal. So, if she is mistaken she might try to understand the point of disagreeing. This, in fact, happened before when one of the students negotiated the meaning of the term "sabbatical" with her and whether it means paid or unpaid. She was very flexible and said that the student is correct and he drew her attention to the correct meaning.

Investigator: Do the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: I consider it *tabʕan* [of course]. In both cases I will be polite but I will be more careful with some who is older and has higher degree, meaning I will not be that comfortable when disagreeing with such a person and I might even avoid disagreement.

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: It's in appropriate when someone does not consider others.

Investigator: Did it happen to you before that one of your classmates ignored your opinion in class?

Student: Yeah, it happened to me once in the class you observed in team work. Making fun of others is another inappropriate way. It happened at school, it happens more at schools. At school people are comfortable they have the space to do whatever they want.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class?

Student: ummm, I don't think social distance makes a difference in the way I disagree. But yeah, distant social distance makes me more daring as we don't know each other. It happened to me before in one of the classes. Friends take disagreement personal.

Investigator: What would you say if you are disagreeing with a professor and one of your peers?

Student: "I think we could consider another point of view", using I think is more polite than just saying "no". "I disagree" is also polite. With peers I can start with "no".

Interview 7 [translated by the author]

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student : Even if it is unacceptable, if I am not convinced with other's opinions I will spell it out to my professor and my classmates, and I have to end up the discussion either by accepting other's stance or they get convinced with my own point of view/

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback

from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student: No, I use the same strategies but I try not to disagree a lot about issues related to the teacher language input because some people think that I am aggressive. In fact, that what exactly happened yesterday, all my classmates thought I was so harsh when I disagreed with the teacher. It seems that I am truly aggressive, I really don't mean it, that's why I try to avoid disagreements altogether.

Investigator: What about the disagreement you expressed about the example the teacher gave for the zero conditional? What do you think of the way you disagreed with her?

Student: Grammar-wise, the sentence is definitely correct, but it's illogical. So, if she the teacher wanted to give an example for the zero conditional, she should have given one that makes sense.

Investigator: And why did you look at your classmate after she justified her use of this example?

Student: Yeah, I looked at my friend because he told me that the example can be logical if it is considered as personal fact, and I was not even convinced with my peer's justification. Anyways, if I find this example on my exam, I will use the zero conditional, as the teacher explained however; I will not be convinced

Investigator: What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

Student: I don't feel that I am aggressive, I think I was ok. Do you think I was so aggressive?

Investigator laughs: This is a tricky question

Student: If I sounded so aggressive, most probably the teacher got disappointed.

Investigator: Why did you use Arabic when you disagreed with your teacher although you are a student in the "A" class, which means that you have no problem communicating in English?

Student: I didn't get this impression that I have to speak English all the time. Anyways, I have no specific reason why I used Arabic.

Investigator: Do the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: I interact with all age groups almost the same way

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: It's in appropriate when people are disagreeing only to win the floor of the argument.

Investigator: How would you justify not interacting with each other's in class or not showing disagreement toward each other's opinion whenever is possible ?

Student: If someone is talking to the teacher, I will not interfere, though I myself don't find a problem with that, I can't talk in such a situation, otherwise I might ruin the whole session. But, I can interfere if a close friend is the one talking to the teacher. I feel more comfortable with disagreeing with close friends because they already know that I am not aggressive

Investigator: Do you consider the difference in status between you and your instructor before the rephrasing your disagreement, especially in English which is your second language, so not to be aggressive as you may seem?

Student: Because English is the second language, sometimes it fails to convey my emotion, that's why I don't seem aggressive when disagreeing in English. However, emotions are better conveyed through Arabic, which is my mother tongue, and that's why people think I am more aggressive when I disagree using Arabic.

Investigator: So, again do you consider the age and the status differences between you and your professor before you select the way you disagree?

Student: When disagreeing I only think about the point I need to make and then I think about the way I disagreed after I see how it disappointed the addressee. Only then I get to know that I was aggressive.

Interview 8 [translated by the author]

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom are acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: It's ok, anyone can disagree to deliver his/her point of view to clarify things for other people and at the end of the day, and this interaction will be beneficial to all sides of the argument.

Investigator: Absolutely, however, I am talking specifically about classrooms, do you think negotiation will lead to the same beneficial outcomes as you previously mentioned?

Student: If there is no interaction in class, there will be no difference between undergraduate education at the Academy and public universities. I mean, in public universities you have to be gullible, you don't have the right to negotiate or state a point of view that is different from that of the professor.

Investigator: Do you have any evidence for what you are saying?

Student: A friend of mine who was student in one of the public universities in Egypt failed a course because he showed disagreement toward his professor point of view. I think that his failure was intentional on the professor's part

Investigator: Is there any difference in the way you disagree with your professor and your peers?

Student: I don't think there is any difference; however, one has to keep in consideration the age and the job position differences?

Investigator: Sorry, I can't get this, How come you keep in consideration all these differences you just mentioned and still disagree with professors the same way you disagree with your peers?

Student : I mean I can disagree with either the professor or my classmates ,but when disagreeing with one of my classmates, I will do in way that is relatable to our age ,but with professors I will be more polite.

Investigator: Does the age or the qualification of the teacher affect the way you disagree with him or her?

Student: The age of the professor definitely makes a difference in the way you communicate with him/her .The less age gap between you and the professor the smoother the communication will be, however one has to take into consideration huge age gap.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points?

Student: If I am disagreeing with someone with a higher degree and he thinks him/herself to be a specialist in his field, I will try to deliver my point of view in a soft manner and at the end of the day what he/she decides will be the best decision.

Investigator: Can you give me an example of what you would say if you disagree with your teacher about her language input?

Student: I can disagree indirectly by saying: "in schools days they told us the x point is done t in that way, is it right or wrong?"

Investigator: Let me ask you about the debate you had last week, did you feel that any of the participants take it personally at one point?

Student: Yeah, by time they started to take it personally.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class?

Student: I don't think that social distance has any effect on the way we disagree in classroom, because we are all there for a certain purpose which is receiving high-standard education so we all participate to achieve this goal. I, myself, don't think that the social distance affected the debate we had in a way or another, we discussed our points of view in the same way we would do with close friends although there were people I dint even know their names.

Interview 9

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom is acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Yeah, it's acceptable. It's something normal. Not everyone agrees with each other, you may have your different opinions, so it's something normal. You have to discuss with people, you have to clear your points out.

Investigator: How would you justify your use of "yes, but" sometimes while disagreeing with your teacher?

Student: Because I have a point to sort out. I know something is right when I'm saying it. Maybe he's is saying something additional to me. It adds some info to me. *Howwa ʔāl hāga fa ʔana bazawed ʕleiha* [here, what the professor already said has been added to]

Investigator: Does the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: Yea. Of course, the thing is the younger the professor is the more he/ she will be closer to my way of thinking. The way I would interact with him/her will definitely be different; he/she will even stoop to the level of thinking of the students according to their age.

Investigator: What would you say if you ever disagree with your professor?

Student: *Law howwa mef* older than me by large age [if he/she is a bit older than me], I'll say "I disagree with you on this point because of this and that".

Investigator: Do you think it's ok to tell your professor "I disagree with you."

Student: Yea, but not in a harsh way. If he's way older, there should be more respect. It's not I disrespect young people, but there are levels of respect.

Investigator: I think you used this form of disagreement (I disagree with you) once with your teacher, do you remember the situation? Did you think about the way you will phrase your disagreement before expressing it, especially that you were talking to your teacher?

Student: I was only expressing my opinion; I just wanted to say I disagree with what you say. I didn't think about the way I will disagree before producing it, it happened all of a sudden without any control, but as long as it was polite, it was ok.

Investigator: Have you witnessed any kind of disagreement with the teacher you thought was challenging?

Student: With my classmates, the people I stay with, no, I haven't seen, but I know there are some people who use this way of disagreeing with people, but it's

not something good, because you know if you disrespect the people you speak, they would feel offended.

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: Do you mean rude?

Investigator: It's ok if you want to name it rude.

Student: it's inappropriate if you disagree in a rude way because this might expose people to embarrassment.

Investigator: Have you ever witnessed that in class before?

Student: I don't concentrate with what other people do in class.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class?

Student: If it's a person I don't know. I think that he doesn't care about my opinion.

Investigator: What do you mean? Can you please explain?

Student: If you know someone new, you won't disagree with them on regular occasions. I think it's common in most people. It means if someone you don't know, you don't care what he thinks.

Investigator: What do you think your instructor might feel if you express disagreement about these aspects? Will he/she feel the same about them all?

Student: *En el explanation way of teaching yaññ?* [you mean her way of teaching?] No, the teacher will be affected in a way. Discussion during class teamwork doesn't affect her too much, it's something for us more than for her, and it affects us more than for her.

Investigator: What if disagree about her language input?

Student: Low negative impact *ōlt hāḥā salbeyā fīhā?* [you mean if I point out something negative about her teaching?]...if I find difficulty understanding, I will simply tell her, but it's difficult to decide how the teacher might feel about this.

Interview 10

Investigator: Do you think expressing disagreement towards the teacher and your peers in classroom is acceptable in a university setting like the Arab Academy?

Student: Honestly, it depends, if I'm disagreeing in an impolite way or I'm stating my opinion in a way that is rude or unethical, I don't think that is appropriate, especially because professors are older than us and they are more experienced. They know what they're saying and what they're doing so we can't disagree in a way like we're in a street we are in a university.

Investigator: Are there any differences in the ways you disagree with your teacher in regards to aspects like language input, ideas, classroom procedures, feedback from the teacher on your language use vs. issues and discussion points? Do you use the same strategies when disagreeing on these points? Would you disagree with her about language input?

Student: *Akīd l?* [definitely not] (she means she won't disagree about language input). If, say, I wrote writing and the teacher gave me feedback, she's a doctor, she knows what she's doing. That's her job, she knows what's best for me. But, if she is discussing issues related to society or politics, I don't have to agree with her, but I also have to be polite while stating my point of view because still she is older than me.

Investigator: Does the age and the qualification of the teacher affect the ways you express disagreement?

Student: I still believe that even if I am disagreeing with someone of my same age, I will do it politely.

Investigator: How disagreement with teachers can be challenging?

Student: *ḥasab the way* [it depends on the way] he said his opinion. If this person said "no, I don't agree with what you said" and no, I did well how are you saying that and you don't appreciate my work" honestly, I believe this person is uhm mef *moḥtaram* [is impolite].

Investigator: Have you witnessed that in your classroom?

Student: In our class? No I don't think. We all respect our teacher. Ahh, but I remember...uhm that was too much, someone disagreed with the teacher about a grammar point, and he shouldn't have done that. I don't think it's polite to talk to your teacher that way. I remember, I even "*Over awī*".

Investigator: How do you feel about expressing disagreement with your peers inside classroom? In what ways it can be appropriate or inappropriate?

Student: As I said before, it doesn't matter the age difference, if I will ever disagree with my classmates, I will do it politely.

Investigator: What do you think about the debate? Did you take it seriously at one point?

Student: At first I thought it's so fun, I felt like I was a lawyer. And even when I was not convinced 100 % with what I was saying, I did my best to win the argument. Honestly, I didn't want our team to easily give up. We did a good performance. We show the teacher *en benāxod el mawdūf beʒad* [we wanted to show the teacher that we take the debate seriously]. We want to win.

Investigator: Does the social distance between you and your peers affect the way you disagree with him or her in class? For example, you already know who was a member in the other group during debate time, did this affect the way you expressed disagreement while debating?

Student: Kind of yes. As for X and the debate, He knows my best friend. It was the first time I saw him. I knew his name. But, honestly, when I'm in class I don't think about my relationship between me and my classmates. For example, if my best friend was on the other side, I'd still do the same thing. I'd still do the same performance and talk in the same way.

Investigator: So, you mean you will disagree with X the same way you do with other distant peers?

Student: Ah, if I'm disagreeing with X, he's a friend now. He became one of my classmates, but when I debate with him, I will do it humourously. He's a friend *yaʕnī*. But, if someone I don't know, and we're talking about something and debating, I will take it more seriously. It depends on my relationship to the person I'm debating with. It still makes a difference if I debate with my best friend or with someone I don't know or just know him from class.

Investigator: How would you justify not interacting that much with each other?

Student: You mean in class or in general?

Investigator: No, I mean in class.

Student: If we are in the middle of the session and we're solving something and someone said a wrong answer, I will not comment because it's not my place to say my opinion. The teacher is the only one who has the right to do so. Maybe the teacher liked it. If I don't like it, if I don't have something good to say, I just don't say it.

Investigator: Do you think that this will be the case even if you are close?

Student: Honestly, I think this is only because we are still at the beginning of the term and we still don't know each other well. But by time, after two or three months we will get used to one another.

Appendix H: Informed consent form



Documentation of Informed Consent for Participation in Research Study

Project Title:

Principal Investigator: [*Hend Tarek Bakry, hendtarek@aucegypt.edu*]

*You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of the research is [*to explore the interaction between students and teachers in language classrooms*], and the findings may be [*published, presented, or both*]. The expected duration of your participation is (*3 weeks*).

The procedures of the research will be as follows [*you will fill in a survey about your relationship with your peers in class, then, you will be video or audio taped for 3 weeks, a semi-structured interview will be conducted to some of the participants. Finally, the data collected from survey, video and audio taping, and interviews will be transcribed and analysed by the researcher*].

*There *will not be* certain risks or discomforts associated with this research.

*There *will be* benefits to you from this research. *The results based on this research will help pointing out issues related to pragmatics; thus, direct the teachers' attention to strategies necessary for developing the learners' pragmatic competence*

*The information you provide for purposes of this research *is confidential*.

"Questions about the research, my rights, or research-related injuries should be directed to Hend Tarek Bakry at 01151192300

*Participation in this study is voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or the loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Date _____